ZUMA,

OR

THE TREE OF HEALTH.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE FAIR PAULINE,—ZENEIDA,—

THE REEDS OF THE TIBER,—

AND THE WIDOW OF LUZI.

BY MADAME DE GENLIS.

LONDON,

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,

CONDUIT STREET, HANOVER SQUARE.

1818.

Printed by
Cox and Baylis, Great Queen Street.

DEDICATION

TO

THE COUNTESS DE CHOISEUL,

FORMERLY PRINCESS DE BAUFFREMONT.

DEAR MADAM,

ONE of the novels in this collection (the Fair Pauline) was communicated to you in 1812, and you are aware of the singular accident, and

the feeling of delicacy which prevented its publication in 1814. Were your suffrage less dear to my heart, I should be better able to appreciate the honor it must confer on an author; but I am convinced that I owe it entirely to your friendship. And this gratifying reflection banishes every seutiment of vanity.

LA COMTESSE DE GENLIS.

ZUMA,

OR

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ABOUT the middle of the seventeenth century, the animosity of the Indians towards the Spaniards existed in all its force; tradition, too faithful, maintained among this oppressed and devoted people the dreadful recollection of the cruelty of their conquerors. They were subjugated, but had not submitted. The Spaniards had only conquered slaves, and their reign was merely the dominion of terror. About this period a Viceroy, more severe than all who had preceded him, excited their powerless and secret hatred to its utmost extent. His Secretary, the rigorous minister of his arbi-

trary will, was a man of insatiable cupidity; and the Indians detested him even more than they did his master. He died suddenly, and the horrid symptoms which preceded his death, induced a universal belief that he had been poisoned by the Indians. Investigations were instituted, but the criminals remained undiscovered. This event occasioned a great sensation; for it was not the first crime of the same description which had occurred among the Indians. It was well known that they were acquainted with various mortal poisons: they had oftener than once been detected in administering them; but neither torture nor the punishment of death, had been successful in drawing from them any confession of these dreadful secrets.

In the meanwhile the Viceroy was recalled; and Count de Cinchon was appointed by the Court of Spain to fill his place. The Count was in the vigour of his age, and endowed with every amiable quality and every virtue, calculated

o conciliate the affection and win the confidence of all around him. He had a short time before married a charming young lady, whom he adored, and by whom he was passionately beloved. The Countess had resolved on following her husband, who dreading, on her account, the perfidy and hatred of the Indians, expressed a wish that she should remain in Spain, notwithstanding the distress which the very thought of such a separation excited in his mind. But the Countess was filled with terrors when she reflected that her husband would be exposed to all the dark conspiracies of hatred and revenge. The facts attested by the late Viceroy, and above all his exaggerated recitals, represented the Indians as vile slaves, who, under the mask of docility, and even attachment, were capable of plotting in secret the blackest and most criminal treachery. Surprising stories were related of the inconceivable subtilty of the poisons of South Ame-

rica, and indeed without exaggeration.* The alarm which these dreadful ideas excited in the mind of the Countess, proved an additional motive in determining her to follow the Viceroy, that she might watch over his safety with all the precautions of fear and all the vigilance of love. She took along with her some Spanish ladies, who were to compose her Court at Lima, and among them was the intimate friend of her childhood. Beatrice (for this was her name) was only a few years older than the Vicequeen; but the attachment she entertained for her was of so tender a nature, that it resembled the affection of a mother. She had used every effort to persuade the Countess to remain at Madrid, but finding that her resolution was

* From the accounts of travellers and naturalists, there are in America certain plants of so venomous a nature, that the poison takes effect on those who happen to step upon them, even with shoes on their feet.

unalterably fixed, she determined to accompany her.

Though the Indians were overjoyed at being freed from the yoke of their Viceroy, they were not the better disposed to receive his successor. He was a Spaniard, and they consequently expected that he would be animated only with feelings of injustice and tyranny and a thirst for wealth. In vain were they informed that the Count was mild, humane, and equitable; they repeated one to the other, *he is a Spaniard!* and these words conveyed the most energetic expression of hatred. Religion had not yet modified these impetuous feelings; her sublime morality was hitherto unknown to the Indians. Their rulers had merely compelled them to observe a few exterior céremonies, and they still retained a great portion of their former superstition and idolatry.

Amidst all their misery, the Indians had exercised, ever since the conquest of America, a secret vengeance which

had not yet roused the suspicion of any Spaniard; they had been forced to yield to their oppressors the gold and diamonds of the new world, but they had concealed from them treasures more precious and more useful to humanity. Though they had resigned to them all the luxury of nature, they had exclusively reserved real benefits to themselves. They alone knew the powerful counter-poisons and wonderful antidotes which cautious nature, or rather Providence, has distributed over these regions as remedies against extreme disorders. The Indians alone were aware of the admirable virtues of the Bark of the Quinquina, and by a solemn and faithfully observed compact, by the most dreadful and frequently renewed oaths, they had pledged themselves never to reveal to their oppressors these important secrets. *.

Amidst the rigours of slavery the In-

* These details are all historical.

dians had always maintained a kind of internal government among themselves; they nominated a chief, whose mysterious functions consisted in assembling them together during the night, at certain periods, to renew their oaths, and sometimes for the purpose of marking out victims among their enemies. The Indians of the townships, who enjoyed greater freedom than those who were subjected to service in the palace of the Viceroy, and who were employed in the public works, never failed to join these nocturnal assemblies, which were held amongst the mountains in desert places, the only access to which was by roads which appeared impassable to the Europeans. But these retreats were to them, if not the happy asylums of liberty, at least the sole refuge which could protect them against tyranny. At this time, their secret and supreme chief (for they had several) was named Ximeo. Irritated by misfortune and private injustice, his soul, though naturally great and

generous, had long since been a stranger to every mild and tender sentiment. A feeling of vehement indignation, which no principle tended to repress, had by daily increase, at length rendered him cruel and ferocious. But the base and cowardly atrocity of poisoning was repugnant to his character. He himself had never employed this horrible instrument of revenge, he had even interdicted it to his companions, and every act of villainy committed in that way was done in contradiction to his will. Ximeo was a father, he had an only son named Mirvan, whom he fondly loved, and whom he had inspired with a portion of his hatred of the Spaniards. Mirvan was young, handsome and generous. About three years before, he had been married to Zuma, the most beautiful of all the Indian women of the environs of Lima. The tenderness and sensibility of Zuma were equal to the charms of her person; she formed the happiness of her husband, and lived only for him and for a child, two

years of age, of which she was the mother.

Another chief, named Azan, next to Ximeo, possessed the greatest ascendance over the Indians. Azan was violent and cruel, and no natural virtue tempered the instinct of fury by which he was constantly animated. These two chiefs believed themselves to be of illustrious origin, they boasted of their descent from the royal race of the Incas.

A few days after the arrival of the new Viceroy, Ximeo convoked, for the following night, a nocturnal meeting on the hill of the *Tree of Health*; thus they designated the tree from which is obtained the Quinquina, or Peruvian Bark. "My "friends," he said, when they had all collected, "a new tyrant is about to "reign over us: let us repeat our oaths "of just revenge. Alas! we dare utter "them only when we are surrounded by "darkness! Unhappy children of the "Sun, we are reduced to conceal our- "selves amidst the shades of night......

" Let us renew around the *Tree of Health* " the awful contract which binds us for " ever to conceal our secrets." Ximeo then, in a more elevated and firm voice, pronounced the following words: " We " swear never to discover to the children " of Europe the divine virtues of this " sacred tree, the only treasure which " remains to us! Woe to the faithless " and perjured Indian, who being se- " duced by false virtue, or fear, or weak- " ness, shall reveal this secret to the " destroyers of his gods, of his sove- " reigns, and of his country! Woe to " the coward who shall make a gift of " this treasure of health to the barbarians " who have enslaved us, and whose an- " cestors burned our temples and cities, " invaded our plains, and bathed their " hands in the blood of our fathers, af- " ter having inflicted on them unheard " of torments!. . . . Let them keep the " gold which they have wrested from us, " and of which they are insatiable; that " gold which has cost them so many

" crimes: but we will at least reserve to
" ourselves this gift of Heaven! ......
" Should a traitor ever arise amongst us,
" we swear to pursue and to exterminate
" him, though he should be our father,
" our brother, or our son. We swear,
" should he be engaged in the bonds of
" marriage, to pursue in him his wife
" and children, if they have not been
" his accusers; and if his children are
" in the cradle, to sacrifice them, so
" that his guilty race may be for ever
" extinct.........My friends, pronounce
" from your inmost souls these formi-
" dable oaths, the formula of which was
" bequeathed to you by your grand-
" fathers, and which you have already
" so many times repeated!"......" Yes,
" yes," the Indians exclaimed with one
voice, " we pronounce all these impre-
" cations against him who shall betray
" this secret; we swear to keep it with
" inviolable fidelity, to endure the most
" dreadful torments, and even death it-
" self, rather than reveal it."

" Look back," said the ferocious Azan, " on the early days of our sub-
" jection; at that terrible period, when
" millions of Indians were put to the
" torture, not one would save his life by
" the disclosure of this secret, which
" our countrymen have kept locked
" within their bosoms for more than two
" hundred years!......Judge then, whe-
" ther we can invent a punishment suf-
" ficiently severe for him who may be-
" tray it!......For my own part, I once
" more swear that if there be an Indian
" among us capable of such a crime,
" that he shall perish only by my hand;
" and should he have a wife, and chil-
" dren sucking at their mother's breast,
" I again swear to plunge my poignard
" in their hearts!"......

This ferocious speech was not pronounced without a design. Azan hated the young Mirvan, the son of Ximeo, not merely because he did not carry his animosity against the Spaniards to a sufficient length, but above all because

Mirvan, the adored husband of the beautiful Zuma, and the father of a charming child, was happy. The wicked are always unfortunate, and always envious. "Azan," replied Mirvan, "it "is possible to keep one's promise with-"out possessing your ferocity; no one "here is capable of perjury; your me-"naces can therefore excite no terror "and are useless. We all know that in "excuse for cruelty you neither want a "a traitor to pursue, nor a crime to "punish." Azan, irritated, was about to reply; but Ximeo prevented a violent dispute, by representing the imprudence and danger of uselessly prolonging these clandestine assemblies, and all immediately dispersed.

The Indians being forced to dissemble, maintained an appearance of respect and submission. A numerous troop of young Indian women, carrying baskets of flowers, assembled at the gates of Lima to receive the Vice-queen. Zuma was at their head, and the Countess was so

struck with her beauty, her grace, and the gentle expression of her countenance, that in the course of a few days she expressed a wish to have her among the number of Indian slaves who were employed in the interior of the palace for the service of the Vice-queen. The Countess quickly conceived such a friendship for Zuma, that she attached her to the private service of her chamber and her person. This favor seemed an act of imprudence in the eyes of Beatrice, whose mind was so prepossessed by the accounts she had heard of the perfidy of the Indians, that notwithstanding the natural generosity of her character, she yielded to every sinister alarm and every black suspicion, which gloomy distrust and terror were capable of inspiring: she was excusable; it was her friend's safety, and not her own, that excited her apprehensions! She observed with distress, the friendship of the Vice-queen for an Indian female, and the women of the Countess conceived an extreme jea-

lousy of Zuma. They took advantage of the weakness of Beatrice to fill her mind with prejudice: they represented Zuma as being false, dissembling, and ambitious, and one who fancied that her pleasing person would pardon every act of presumption; that she was far from loving the Countess, and that she entertained an inveterate abhorrence of the Spaniards. They soon went still greater lengths, and attributed to her the most extravagant discourse. Beatrice did not indeed give credit to all that was related to her, but she conceived a degree of inquietude and distrust which inspired her with a real aversion for Zuma. This enmity became the stronger when she found that Zuma was immoveably fixed in the good graces of the Vice-queen, who daily testified more and more attachment towards the object of so much hatred, injustice, and calumny. Zuma, on her part, entertained the tenderest affection for the Countess; nevertheless, to avoid disagreeable scenes, she almost

wholly confined herself to her own chamber, and seldom appeared, except when the Countess required her services.

The Viceroy spared no endeavours to render himself beloved by the Indians; but the latter had known instances of several Viceroys having manifested mildness, justice, and affability at the commencement of their government, who afterwards belied all these happy promises. Thus the real goodness of the Count made no favourable impression upon them. They regarded it as hypocrisy or weakness, occasioned by fear on account of the sudden death of the secretary of his predecessor.

The Countess had now resided about four months at Lima, and a visible decline had taken place in her health. This distressing change was at first attributed to the burning heat of the climate; but as her indisposition daily augmented, alarm was entertained for her safety, and she was at length suddenly attacked with a tertian fever. Every re-

medy known at that period was employed without effect. The anxiety of Beatrice knew no bounds; she privately questioned the physician who had come from Spain in the suite of the Viceroy, but who, regarding the case as hopeless, spoke in a mysterious way, and even hinted that he attributed the illness of the Countess to some extraordinary cause, of which he could give no account. His air of dismay and apparent wish to conceal his real opinion, all tended to inspire Beatrice with the horrible idea that her friend was dying by the effect of slow poison....... She enjoyed not a moment's rest: though she cautiously hid her suspicions from the Countess, and even from the Count, yet she found it impossible to dissemble with two of the Countess's women, who used every effort to strengthen the notion she had imbibed......But who could have committed this horrible crime?......None but Zuma. ......Zuma, who was privileged to enter the apartment of the Vice-queen at every hour. ......But Zuma, whom the

Countess had overwhelmed with acts of bounty! ...... What interest could have prompted her to this atrocity? Hatred is ever ready with replies to serve her own purposes !...... Zuma was hypocritical, vain and ambitious, and she moreover entertained a secret and criminal passion for the Viceroy. ......In a word, she was an Indian, and had been familiarized from her infancy with the blackest of crimes.

Beatrice for some time laboured to repel these horrible suspicions, but she beheld the existence of her friend rapidly declining, and her terror no longer allowed her to reason and observe with her own eyes; she lent a ready ear to every accusation, and gave credit to the most extravagant calumny. In the meanwhile, the Viceroy experienced the bitterest anguish of mind, and without imagining the commission of any crime, he felt the utmost alarm at the long continuation of the Countess's indisposition. However,, a favorable change in the

state of the patient kindled a ray of hope, which beamed for the space of a day or two. The physician, overjoyed, pronounced her recovery to be almost certain, suspicion gradually slumbered, and Beatrice seemed restored to new existence. She did not, however, revoke the private orders she had given, for secretly watching Zuma, and never permitting her to enter the chamber in which were deposited the various medicinal draughts prepared for the Countess.

Amidst all these different agitations, the thoughts of the innocent and sensible Zuma were turned wholly on the Vice-queen, whom she loved with all the sincerity of a pure and grateful soul. She was afflicted to the utmost on reflecting that there existed an infallible remedy to which she dared not direct her. Zuma well knew the horrible oaths by which the Indians had bound themselves never to reveal this secret. Had her own life alone been marked out as the sacrifice, she would not for a moment

have hesitated to divulge all she knew; but her husband and her son must have been the certain victims of such a declaration: finally, she was aware that the vindictive Ximeo, the better to insure himself of her discretion, had placed her beloved child as a hostage in the hands of the ferocious Azan and Thamis, another Indian chief, who, though less cruel than Azan, was animated by an equal hatred of the Spaniards. Zuma, therefore, dared not confide her grief to Mirvan; she smothered her tears, and deplored her fate in silence. Her affliction was suddenly increased, for the feeble hope which had been entertained of the Countess's recovery soon vanished; the fever returned with redoubled violence, the physician declared her life to be in danger, and that the Countess could not support another such attack, should it be renewed within twelve days or a fortnight......! Universal dismay prevailed throughout the palace ......! This cruel declaration plunged

the Count and Beatrice into despair, and rent the heart of Zuma. The Vice-queen, who was fully aware of her situation, manifested as much courage as gentleness and piety; the resignation of the happiest life, when accompanied by the consciousness of perfect purity, is always a calm sacrifice: she received, by her own desire, all her sacraments. She took a tender farwell of her friend and her husband, having exhorted the latter to watch over the happiness of the Indians, and particularly that of her dear Zuma; and she resigned herself wholly to the consolations of religion. Zuma, who had been a witness to this pathetic scene, could no longer withstand the excess of her grief; her health, which had been in a declining state for the space of three months, now yielded to the weight of her affliction, and she was attacked that very evening with the disorder which threatened the life of the Countess, the tertian fever. After she had sustained two or three violent attacks

Mirvan, with the consent of the Indians, secretly conveyed to her the precious powder which was to operate her cure, on condition, however, that she should not be entrusted with it in any large quantity, but should daily receive an allowance sufficient for one dose. Zuma received in the morning the first dose, which was to be taken before she retired to rest in the evening. When she was alone, she looked steadfastly on the powder, her countenance was bathed in tears, and raising her eyes to heaven, " Great God!" she exclaimed, " I am inspired by thee!...... I can only save her, by sacrificing my own life; my resolution is fixed—I will never disclose the mighty secret......My death will expiate my compassion, even in their eyes: besides, they will never suspect such an act of devotion, and will attribute her cure to the help of medicine. I shall neither endanger the safety of Mirvan nor my child; I shall not betray the secrets of my countrymen: I shall die;

but the Countess will live. What signifies the existence of poor Zuma?...... and how precious is the life of that daughter of Heaven, who has employed her power only to assist the unfortunate and console the afflicted; that generous Protectress of all who pine in poverty and slavery, and whose faltering voice, but now, sent forth a prayer for the cruel Indians who suffer her to languish! Oh, my benefactress, even though surrounded by the shades of death, you did not forget your faithful Zuma! I heard your lips pronounce a blessing on her name! ......Yes, by the sacred light of the Sun, I swear that I will save you."......With these words Zuma wrapped up the powder of the Quinquina, concealed it in her bosom, and rose from her chair; then suddenly stopping, she began to reflect on the means of introducing herself unperceived into the closet where the drink intended for the Countess was placed. She had no idea of the suspicions entertained against her, nor of the precau-

tions which had been adopted to render this closet inaccessible to her as well as the rest of the Indian slaves; she merely supposed that since the illness of the Vice-queen her Spanish women had appropriated to themselves the task of attending on her person, either through fear or jealousy, or one of those customs to which she had heard them so frequently allude, and which they termed *etiquette*. She resolved to enter the closet during the night, after the maid, who slept there, had retired to rest; and in case of her being discovered, she had determined to say, anxiety had induced her to quit her chamber to enquire after the state of the Countess. At the same time, wishing to ascertain whether she could introduce herself into the closet without passing through the apartment of the Vice-queen, she descended into a long corridor, and having looked cautiously around her, she discovered a small side door, which, as she had previously supposed, communicated with the

closet: the key was in the lock, and she determined to enter in this way during the night. She then speedily returned to her chamber.

In conformity with the orders of Beatrice, Zuma's conduct was watched with the utmost minuteness, and the servants of the palace hastened to inform Beatrice, that Mirvan had been to visit her that very day; that one of the maids who had been stationed at the door to listen to their conversation, had not been able to collect a single word, in consequence of the low tone of voice in which they discoursed, but that Mirvan was excessively agitated on departing; that Zuma had descended the staircase, had searched about the corridor, examining every door, and that on discovering that which led into the closet, she indicated evident designs of fear, lest she should be surprised, and that she finally escaped to her own apartment. Beatrice shuddered at this recital, she immediately foresaw that Zuma entertained the

design of introducing herself into the closet during the night; she ordered the women to warn her of the moment when Zuma should quit her chamber, and at the same time directed them to avoid entering the closet, and to leave the key in the door. Beatrice without delay communicated all she had heard to the Viceroy, who, without adopting her suspicions, was nevertheless filled with amazement at the story, and agreed to conceal himself in the closet.

About one hour after sunset, the servants came to inform Beatrice that Zuma was descending the staircase, but without any light, and with all the precautions of mystery and fear. Beatrice and the Count immediately proceeded to their place of concealment. In a few moments they heard the door gently open, and Zuma appeared. She was pale and trembling, she walked slowly, and with apparent effort...... She looked around the chamber with a countenance which announced distress and fear; she listened

for some time at the door which communicated with the apartment of the Vice-queen; all was silent....... Zuma then approached the table, on which a medicinal draught had been placed in a decanter of cristal, for the purpose of being administered to the Countess; she drew from her bosom the paper containing the quinquina powder; opened it and shook the powder into the decanter. The Viceroy seized with horror, rushed into the closet, exclaiming, "Wretched "woman! what have you put into the me-"dicine?"......At this unexpected sight, at this terrible question, Zuma started with dismay, the decanter fell from her hands and shivered in pieces; she threw herself into a chair, uttering the words, *I am undone!*......and swooned away.

Zuma was conveyed to her chamber. The Count and Beatrice deemed it prudent to conceal this supposed crime from the knowledge of the Vice-queen; she, said the Count, will sue for mercy on this wretch, whom no consideration on

earth can induce me to pardon; there must be an example, and I am resolved to make one. It was soon proclaimed through the palace and the city, that Zuma had been detected in an attempt to poison the Vice-queen. That very evening she was delivered into the hands of justice and conveyed to prison. Mirvan hastened in search of Azan and Thamir: the hand of death was already on his heart, and he could utter only the following words: "My son is in your "power. At least promise, on condi- "tion that we keep this secret inviola- "bly, that after our death, you will re- "store the child to my father."—"We "swear to do so," answered Azan, "but "you are well aware that his life must "be the forfeit of the least indiscretion." —"We know how to die," replied Mirvan. With these words he quitted the ferocious Indian, and voluntarily committed himself to prison. He could easily guess the act which Zuma had attempted, but to explain it and justify

her, would have been to abandon his child to the rage of the ferocious Azan; he therefore resolved to die with his wretched wife.

At break of day the council assembled to examine and pass sentence on Mirvan and Zuma. The doors of the court were thrown open, and the Indians were permitted to enter; they assembled in great numbers, headed by their secret chiefs, Ximeo, Azan, and Thamir. Mirvan and Zuma were brought in loaded with chains. The latter, on beholding her husband, exclaimed with vehemence, "he is not "guilty, he had no share in what I did, "he was ignorant of my design."...... "Zuma," interrupted Mirvan, "your "death is certain, how then can you "think of defending my life?......I am "not accused, I voluntarily share your "fate......Zuma, let us die *in silence*, let "us die with courage, and our child will "still live."......Zuma understood the real meaning of these words, she made no

reply, but her face was bathed in tears. The examination then commenced.

'Zuma was unable to deny the facts to which Beatrice and the Viceroy had been witnesses. She was asked from whom she had obtained the powder. She received it from me, exclaimed Mirvan. Zuma denied this, still protesting that her husband was entirely ignorant of her designs. And what were your designs? enquired the judge.—Did not you intend to poison the Vice-queen? Why else did you make use of this powder? Did you fancy that you were employing a salutary remedy?......At this question, Zuma trembled: her eyes, at this moment, met those of the cruel Azan; his threatening glance filled her with horror, she fancied she beheld him strangling her child. No, no, she exclaimed, in a distracted tone, I know of no salutary remedy.—It was poison then?......You confess it?—I confess nothing.—Answer then.—Alas! I am compelled to be si-

lent. At these words, Ximeo advanced and placed himself between Mirvan and Zuma; let me likewise be chained, said he, I will die along with them. Oh my father! live for our child's sake! they exclaimed with one voice. But Ximeo persisted.

The judges had been directed neither to employ torture nor to make any enquiry respecting accomplices; they removed Ximeo, and Mivan and Zuma were conveyed back to prison. The Countess's physician appeared and was examined. He declared that the illness of the Vice-queen having baffled the most efficacious remedies, and being accompanied by extraordinary symptoms, horrible suspicions at length arose in his mind, and that the action in which Zuma had been detected leaving no room to doubt the atrocity of her design, had confirmed him in an idea which he had long endeavoured to repel; that finally he no longer doubted that this perverse slave had administered a slow poison to the Vice-

queen, and that finding herself excluded from the service of the chamber, and fearing lest the youth of the Countess, and the attention which was devoted to her, might in course of time overcome the effects of a poison which had been sparingly administered, she intended to consummate her crime by a powerful dose. At this detail the judges were nearly petrified with horror; they collected the votes and condemned Mirvan and Zuma to perish amidst the flames of a pile, that very day at noon. They were again brought into court. Mirvan heard his sentence with heroic firmness. Zuma, bathed in tears, threw herself at his feet: I have sacrificed you, she exclaimed, that thought fills me with remorse, dare I hope for your forgiveness? ......Let us not accuse our judges of cruelty, he replied, the tyrants who condemn us, deliver us from a horrible yoke; a few hours will free us from the bonds of slavery!......These words moved the obdurate heart of Azan himself:

Mirvan, said he, be not concerned for the fate of your son, he shall be as dear to me as *if* he were my own.

It was now nine in the morning, and orders were given for erecting the fatal pile.

The Vice-queen was dying; the physician announced to the Viceroy that every hope had vanished, that it was impossible she could support three more fits of fever, and that six or seven days, at most, would terminate her existence. The Count, in a paroxysm of despair, could entertain no thought of mercy: besides, regarding Zuma as the most execrable monster that nature had ever produced, he was divested of all feeling of compassion for her. He gave orders that a pardon should be offered to Mirvan, on condition of his making a sincere confession of his crime. "Tell the Vice-"roy," answered Mirvan, "that even "though he promised me the life of "Zuma, he should never draw from me "another syllable."

The Viceroy did not wish to be in Lima during this dreadful execution; he therefore departed for one of his pleasure-houses, situated about half a league from the city, intending not to return until the evening.

The wretched Ximeo vainly devised a thousand different projects, all tending to save Mirvan and Zuma; he anxiously wished to assemble his friends, but during the whole of the morning the Indians were so closely watched, that he found no possibility of secretly conversing with Azan and Thamir. A proclamation was issued, ordering all the Indians in Lima to attend the execution. They were without arms; the Spanish guard was doubled and ranged round the pile; in addition to this, the unfortunate victims were escorted by two hundred soldiers. Ximeo found himself compelled to submit to his fate: he was overwhelmed with despair, and resolved to throw himself on the pile with his children.

Whilst the whole city, filled with con-

sternation, awaited this dreadful spectacle, the Vice-queen, still ignorant of the tragical event, was stretched upon her bed of sickness, weaker and more afflicted than ever. Since six in the morning all her attendants had evinced the utmost agitation. This at length attracted the notice of the Countess; she made enquiries, and plainly perceived that Beatrice wished to conceal something from her, and that she imposed silence on the rest of her women. Beatrice frequently quitted the apartment, that she might without constraint give vent to her sorrow. During her absence the Countess strictly questioned one of her maids, and so imperatively enjoined her to tell the truth, that the girl informed her of all, and added, that Mirvan and Zuma, far from denying the imputation laid to their charge, had gloried in their crime. The surprise of the Countess was equal to the horror with which she was inspired by this dreadful communication. "Oh, supreme mercy!" she

exclaimed, "I can now invoke thee with more confidence than ever."...... She immediately ordered her servants to prepare an open litter, and with the assistance of her women she rose, and was dressed in a loose robe of muslin. In spite of the tears and entreaties of the Spanish ladies and Beatrice, the Countess threw herself upon the litter which was borne by four slaves, a fifth carrying over her head a large parasol of taffety; in this manner, with her face concealed by a long white veil, she departed....... Twelve o'clock struck; ......At this moment Mirvan and Zuma on foot, loaded with chains, quitted their prison to undergo the execution of their sentence. Zuma, who was scarcely able to support herself, rested on the arm of a priest, and was guarded by two soldiers; immense crowds had collected to see them. Amidst the multitude she perceived Azan, bearing her child in his arms, and making an effort to attract her observation. At this sight she uttered a

piercing shriek, a maternal shriek which vibrated through every heart......but collecting her strength, that she might once again embrace the adored child, she disengaged herself from the hands of the priest and the soldiers, and darted towards Azan ...... Azan placed the child on the palpitating bosom of Zuma. The wretched mother, amidst a torrent of tears, gave her child the last maternal kiss. "Zuma," said Azan, in a low tone of voice, "summon all your courage; re- "collect that your death is in itself a "revenge, and that it will serve to render "our secret the more inviolable"..... "Oh! I wish for no revenge:" answered Zuma. "Alas! were it possible to "save the Vice-queen!" ...... She could not utter more, the soldiers came to lead her away; the hand of death was upon her when they tore her from her child; and at that terrible moment she seemed to be offering up the sacrifice of her life.

The procession advanced; they were scarcely three hundred paces from the

place of execution. At this moment a mournful trumpet announced the approach of the victims, the resinous wood which formed the top of the pile was kindled...... They entered an alley of plane trees, at the end of which they beheld the fatal spot, and the flames which seemed to mingle with the clouds. At this terrible spectacle Zuma shrunk back with horror; at that moment she was delivered from the torment of thinking on her husband and her child; stupor succeeded to sensibility, and the idea of her approaching destruction now wholly occupied her mind; she saw before her inevitable death, and death under the most horribly threatening aspect. ......Her strength failed her; the frozen blood no longer circulated in her veins; her face was tinged with mortal paleness; and, though not in a state of total unconsciousness, she sunk into the arms of the priest who; notwithstanding her repeated but vague protestations, still exhorted her to repentance! ...... Zuma, said Mir-

van, our suffering will notbe of long duration; behold those whirlwinds of smoke; we shall be suffocated in a few moments! ......Ah! replied Zuma, in a voice scarcely audible, I see nothing but fire...... nothing but flame...... They advanced. ......Every step which brought Zuma nearer to her death augmented her unconquerable terror!......The Indians had already ranged themselves round the pile in sad consternation; they all held in their hands a branch of cypress, as an emblem of mourning; they were surrounded by Spanish guards......A noise was suddenly heard at some distance, a horseman at full gallop appeared within view, exclaiming, "hold, hold, by "order of the Vice-queen; she is ap- "proaching."...... At these words all were struck motionless; Zuma folded her hands and sent forth a supplication to heaven; but her soul, weighed down by terror, was not yet penetrated by the faintest gleam of hope!...... At length the litter of the Vice-queen was per-

ceived, she urged her slaves to advance with the utmost speed, and she quickly reached the fatal spot: the Spanish guards ranged themselves round the Vice-queen and the Indians formed a semi-circle before her: the Countess then raised her veil and discovered a pale and languishing countenance, but full of grace and gentleness, and which was itself a speaking emblem of mercy! ...... I do not possess, said she, the happy right of granting pardon, but it is a favour which I am certain of obtaining from the goodness of the Viceroy. In the meanwhile I take under my protection and safeguard these two unfortunate creatures; let their chains be taken off, extinguish without delay this terrific pile which should never have been kindled had I been sooner informed of the event......At these words the Indians threw down their branches of cyprus, and the air resounded with reiterated cries of *Long live the Vice-queen!*...... Ximeo rushed forward, exclaiming, *yes,*

she shall live !......Zuma threw herself on her knees. Almighty God, she said, finish the work Thou hast begun !...... The Vice-queen signified her wish that Mirvan and Zuma should follow her; she caused them to be placed near her litter, and in this manner returned to the palace, followed by an immense multitude who enthusiastically invoked blessings on her clemency and goodness. Having arrived at the palace she threw herself on her bed, and expressed a desire that Mirvan and Zuma should enter her apartment; they did so, and placed themselves at her bedside. Owing to the agitation, fatigue, and distress of mind which the Countess had undergone, her strength was so completely exhausted, that she fancied herself to be bordering on the last moments of her existence !......She stretched forth one hand to Mirvan and the other to Zuma, who bathed in tears, fell on her knees to receive it !......Beatrice could no longer support this scene, and she entreated

the Countess to suffer the two Indians to be removed, under guard, to an adjoining chamber. No, no, said the Vice-queen, I will answer for them here, and will do so before the Supreme Arbiter by whom we shall all be judged! ......Oh! leave them here, they are sent to open for me the gates of heaven! ......Great God! said Beatrice, must I see you in the hands of the monsters who have poisoned you! Where can I be better at this moment? replied the Vice-queen;......On the bosom of friendship my mind is overwhelmed with superfluous regret......but these trembling hands which I press within my own, fortify my courage; the very sight of these unfortunate beings diffuses calmness and confidence through my soul!...... Oh my benefactress, said Zuma, suffocated with grief, should heaven frustrate my only hope, it will then be seen whether or not the wretched Zuma loved you! No, I never can survive you! ......At these words Beatrice shuddered.

Detestable hypocrisy! she exclaimed. ......Do not insult them, said the Countess, they repent; see they shed tears! ......Ah! Zuma, pursued she, you, whose gentle figure bespoke a celestial soul!......You whom I have so dearly loved!......how can I entertain the slightest resentment against you?......I look upon you both as the instruments of my eternal happiness; I forgive you with a willing heart; may you return to the consolations of religion with equal sincerity......Zuma, almost driven to distraction, was about to speak, and perhaps to reveal a part of the secret which weighed a thousand times more heavily on her mind, than if she had only had her own life to defend; but Mirvan interrupted her: Zuma, said he, let us be silent! the voice of the Countess will bring down the truth from heaven! Let us place our trust in the God whom she invokes! He will save her precious life and will justify us!......These words were pronounced in so sincere a tone

and with so solemn an air, that they made a powerful impression even on Beatrice. The Vice-queen wished to interrogate Mirvan, but in vain; he entreated that she would question him no further, and for two hours maintained the most obstinate silence.

The Vice-queen, before proceeding to the pile to save Zuma, had dispatched a messenger to the Count to hasten his return to the palace; she every moment expected him, and was astonished that he had not yet arrived. She was about to send off another courier, when an extraordinary clamour was heard throughout the place. Beatrice quitted the Countess's chamber to enquire the cause of the agitation; a moment after the Countess distinguished the voice of the Viceroy, she ordered the door to be thrown open, and exclaimed, My lord, I entreat your pardon for the guilty. ......They are your deliverers!......replied the Viceroy, entering the apartment. All were petrified with amazement. The

Viceroy held a lovely boy in his arms. Zuma uttered a shriek of joy; it was her child. The Viceroy rushed forward, placed the child upon her bosom, and prostrated himself at her feet......Ximeo followed him, he advanced, and addressing himself to Mirvan: You may now speak, said he, with the consent of all the Indians: the secret is revealed, we have all tasted the powder in the presence of the Viceroy; he himself insisted on partaking of it before he brought it here ......At these words, Zuma transported, almost drowned in tears, strained her child within her arms, and returned thanks to Heaven. Mirvan embraced his father, the Vice-queen asked a thousand questions in a breath; the Count briefly related all that the Indians had revealed to him. Great Heaven! exclaimed the Countess, throwing her arms round the neck of Zuma, this angelic creature would have laid down her life to save me, and she was on the verge of being sacrificed!......In the performance

of so sublime an action she was accused of an atrocious crime !......And the fears of this heroic couple for the preservation of their child, added the Viceroy, made them endure with unconquerable firmness, shame, ignominy, and the aspect of a terrible death !...... Ah ! said Zuma, the Vice-queen has done still more ! Though she believed us to be monsters of ingratitude and atrocity, and the authors of all her suffering, yet she protected and delivered us, and with what kindness, what generosity !......She, as well as yourselves, replied the Viceroy, will now receive the reward due to virtue......Here are two doses of the blessed powder, the one for Zuma and the other for the Vice-queen......So saying, the Count himself poured the Quinquina into two separate cups ; Zuma drank first, and the Vice-queen wished to receive the salutary beverage from her hand. All present were melted into tears ; the Vice-queen already revived by the double influence of joy and hope, received with

transport the tender embraces of her husband, Beatrice, and the happy Zuma; she raised Zuma's child to her pillow, and loaded him with the tenderest caresses; she promised to be thenceforth his second mother. Beatrice and the rest of the Spanish ladies surrounded Zuma; they gazed upon her with admiration. Beatrice, in a fit of transport, kissed her hand, that beneficent hand which she had accused of having committed an execrable crime!......In the midst of this enthusiasm, the Viceroy took Mirvan and Zuma by the hand, he opened a window and led them out on a balcony overlooking the principal street in the city, which was at that time filled with Spaniards and Indians. "Here," said he, pointing to Mirvan and Zuma, "here are the voluntary victims of gratitude, generous sentiment and the sanctity of oaths!......Indians, their sublime virtues and those of the Vice-queen have led you to abjure a hatred formerly too pardonable, but now unjust! you have,

by an unanimous wish, freed yourselves from the cruel oath formed by revenge; instead of our secret enemies you have become the benefactors of the old world! To render you happy will henceforth not merely be the duty of humanity but of gratitude; and that duty shall be fulfilled. Indians, all who in this memorable assembly have come to sacrifice feelings of resentment to admiration and gentle pity, Indians, you are free; such sentiments place you on a footing of equality with your conquerors! Enjoy this glory, virtue has effected your liberation!...... Love your sovereign and serve him with fidelity: let the *tree of health* flourish on the land which will be distributed among you: reflect when you cultivate it, that the whole universe is indebted to you for this blessing of the Creator!"......This address excited universal enthusiasm, and the Viceroy wishing to terminate the day by the triumph of Zuma, gave orders that she should be attired in a magnificent dress: a crown

of laurel was placed upon her head, and she was seated on a superb chair of state; all the ladies of the court of the Vice-queen placed themselves in her suite; she was attended by the Vice-queen's guard of honour; a herald on horseback preceded the retinue, pronouncing the following words: "*Behold Zuma, the wife of the virtuous Mirvan and the preserver of the Vice-queen!*" Zuma, reclined on cushions of cloth of gold, pressed her child to her bosom, and carried in one hand a branch of *the tree of health*. In this way she proceeded through the principal streets of Lima, amidst the acclamations of the people, who assembled in crowds to see her and to overwhelm her with benedictions. On Zuma's return to the palace, the Vice-queen received her with open arms. She was then conducted to an elegant suite of apartments prepared expressly for her and her husband; servants were appointed to attend on them, and they were thenceforward to be regarded as the most intimate and

dearest friends of the Vice-queen. In the evening the city and all the court-yards of the palace were illuminated, and in the gardens tables were laid out with sumptuous refreshments for the Indians.

The Vice-queen and Zuma were quickly freed from every remaining trace of fever; at the termination of a week the Vice-queen was in a perfect state of convalescence. On the same spot where the fatal pile had excited such a sensation of horror, the Viceroy erected an obelisk of white marble, on which the following words were engraven in characters of gold:

TO ZUMA,

THE FRIEND AND PRESERVER OF THE VICE-QUEEN,

AND

BENEFACTRESS OF THE OLD WORLD.

On each side of this obelisk *a tree of health* was planted: that blessed tree, sanctified by so many virtues, and which, among the Indians, afterwards became the emblem of every virtue which does honour to humanity. The Viceroy lost

no time in sending to Europe the precious powder of the Quinquina, which was long known by the name of *the Countess's Powder*,* but which in Latin still preserves its original name.

Fortune and honours never inspired with pride the generous and sensible Zuma; she was always passionately beloved by the Vice-queen, and her own virtues rendered her worthy of her glory and happiness.

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* Historical.

THE

FAIR PAULINE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

This novel was written in 1812, and was to have appeared, together with some others, in 1814. A singular accident retarded its publication; it would at that time have had the appearance of *flattery*. I determined neither to change the name of my hero (who in reality effected the union of the two mountains), nor to publish the work at the period above-mentioned. To me it has ever been a gratifying task to cite anecdotes which may prove agreeable to existing families: the writer of history is allowed to indulge this taste, and I have even made it a duty in the History of Henry IV, and in the Journal of the Marquess de Dangeau. Yielding, however, to this disposition to please, may occasionally, in novel-writing, give rise to vexatious interpretations. A candid and impartial author has indeed nothing to fear from elevated minds; but there are persons, who being unable to judge of the merits of a work, convert themselves, as it were, into literary spies, and look into every new production with the view of discovering misrepresentations or base and reprehensible designs, for the mere pleasure of publishing them to society; and even when nothing can be found to justify condemnation, they fancy they display acuteness of

mind and liveliness of imagination by inventing that which really does not exist, and which is totally devoid of probability. All this is done without any feeling of animosity, but merely for the sake of shining in conversation. In addition to this, a poor author, who has attained any degree of celebrity, has to endure *the system* of malignity adopted by certain Journalists, who seem to be of opinion that they would lose the one half of their subscribers, were they to evince justice in their criticisms; such is the good opinion they entertain of their readers. What can the writer oppose to all this? A studious and solitary life, and above all the conscientiousness of having made a good use of the portion of talent he has received from nature.

In order to mitigate the severity of any reproach to which I may be exposed, I must confess that I have been guilty of an anachronism by placing the Fair Pauline at the court of Raymond the VII. This license, which is allowable in poetry, may surely be granted to the novelist; it is the only way in which I am capable of imitating Virgil.

THE

FAIR PAULINE.

RAYMOND VII, the last Count of Toulouse, is celebrated in history for his gallantry, his virtues, his valour, and the wars he carried on to reconquer the possessions which had been lost by his unfortunate father. His courage and perseverance at length enabled him to recover his inheritance, and peace was the happy result of his long labours. The Count, who was still in the prime of life, entertained a passion for literature; his court was the rendezvous of all the most celebrated provençal poets; he himself possessed an original turn of mind which frequently degenerated into eccentricity. Like all the Princes of his age, he was a writer of verses, and in

the course of conversation frequently employed metaphors more singular than brilliant, and comparisons which could only be admissible in poetry: no critic ventured to hint that these comparisons ought to be correct and original. A poetical sovereign rarely finds a censor within his own dominions. Raymond, however, detested flattery; he wished that all his courtiers, whilst they observed the rules prescribed by etiquette, should preserve their independence of character, and behave with the same freedom towards him as they would to their equals. He never repressed decent gaiety, nor prohibited good-humoured satire, or the sallies of provençal vivacity. His court was composed not of deceitful masks, all closely resembling each other, but of amusing and diversified physiognomies: in fine, men with whose characters he was acquainted, and from whose conversation he derived both amusement and useful information; for in the freedom of *bons mots,* epigrams and

animated discussions, truth easily develops herself; she is under less restraint than in conversations of a more studied and serious nature.

Among the young chevaliers of Raymond's court who had distinguished themselves in the late campaigns, he who surpassed all the rest for intrepidity, prodigious strength, agility in combat, and elevation of character, was the noble and brilliant Blaccas, the issue of an illustrious family, and the Lord of Moustiers. The Count of Toulouse honoured him with the warmest friendship. Blaccas united to the most intrepid courage a humane and generous heart; he was daring in the field, sincere at court, and abounding in gentleness and indulgence. He was beloved by his rivals, notwithstanding his superiority over them, because he never assumed an appearance of haughtiness and disdain, and above all because he despised fortune, and never took advantage of his successes in order to procure favors. Blaccas was

ambitious, but his ambition was as noble and elevated as his soul. As glory was all he sought for and all he loved, he did not feel the necessity of regulating his desires by the dictates of prudence. He saw no elevation above the level of his own sentiments and courage: he had hitherto formed no positive plans as to his future establishment or rank; but to him the idea of conquering a throne would not have appeared more astonishing than the sudden acquisition of some military distinction, to which his valour entitled him. The Count of Toulouse admired the ardour and ingenuousness of his disposition, and that turn of originality which the loftiness of his sentiments, and the gaiety of his character, imparted to his mind. The Count had, on more than one occasion, wished to induce him to marry; he had even pointed out to his favorite several rich heiresses, but in vain. Blaccas, who was insensible to riches, seemed equally so to love: he was, however, but too susceptible of

a great passion, but his choice had hitherto been suspended by a sensibility which prevented him from fixing it.

Raymond had an only daughter, who was then in her sixteenth year; she had been educated far from the theatre of war, in an old castle, about twenty leagues from Toulouse. This young Princess, who had never visited her father's court, was named Orasia, and her beauty was greatly extolled. The Count appointed Blaccas to be the bearer of a letter, informing her that before the conclusion of the summer he intended to remove her to the court. Blaccas was moreover charged personally to acquaint the Princess, that the court was occupied in carrying on negociations for her marriage with the Count de Poitiers, brother to the King of France,* and that in furtherance of this design he intended immediately to proceed to Paris. Blaccas departed on the follow-

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* Saint-Louis.

ing day, with orders to rejoin the Count at the court of Louis, as soon as he should have executed his commission.

On the day after his departure, Blaccas, who was accompanied only by a squire and a page, found himself in the midst of a forest, about three-quarters of a league from the castle of the Princess Orasia. Whilst they were crossing it, they were startled by the sound of female shrieks at a short distance. Blaccas instantly spurred his horse, and galloped with the rapidity of lightning to the spot from whence the cries proceeded; his squire and page followed him at a short distance. As they advanced they discovered a lady bathed in tears, stretched upon a litter, and surrounded by robbers. At the sight of the brave Knight the banditti precipitately fled. The lady whom Blaccas had thus rescued was about forty years of age, and of dignified deportment; she testified the warmest gratitude to her liberator. Blaccas, on being informed that

she was on her way to Toulouse, insisted on escorting her safely beyond the confines of the forest. He delivered the Count's letter to his page, with orders to convey it immediately to the Princess, and to inform her that he would himself arrive at the castle within an hour. Having conduced Doralice (for such was the lady's name) as far as the great road, he took his leave of her, and again turning into the forest, proceeded to the castle of the Princess with all the swiftness of which his horse was capable. He had not proceeded far when he met his page, who had been sent back to meet him. He questioned him respecting the young Princess: the page spoke of her beauty with so much enthusiasm, that Blaccas became interested and redoubled his enquiries. The page informed him that he had seen the Princess at the further end of the park, seated in a grove of lilac, singing and playing on the lute; that she wore a dress

of celestial blue, a girdle, and necklace of amber, and that a wreath of lilac adorned her beautiful fair hair; he added, that the regularity of her features and the elegance of her figure were incomparable. The page was proceeding with his description, when having crossed the drawbridge, the young Knight entered the courtyard of the castle. His arrival was not so soon expected; an old squire, deaf and almost blind, who came out to receive him, observed that the Princess was still in the park and offered to conduct him to her presence. Blaccas immediately alighted from his horse and followed the squire. He quickly descried the grove of lilac in full blossom, and being weary of the tardy pace at which his guide proceeded, he observed that he no longer stood in need of his services. Without even waiting for a reply, he quitted the squire and advanced rapidly towards the arbour. In a few moments he heard the sound of a lute, and the tones of a melo-

dious voice singing the hymn of our Lady of Beauvezer.* On entering the grove he was struck dumb with astonishment and admiration at sight of the enchanting object which appeared before him!....He now found that his page had described merely the dress and ornaments of the divine Orasia; but that he had not even given him the most distant idea of her incomparable and overpowering beauty. Blaccas contemplated her in silence for several minutes. He was firmly resolved not to mention the name of her destined husband. He bowed profoundly and bent one knee to the ground, then placing his hand upon his heart, he suddenly rose and disappeared from her presence. He hastily traversed the garden, and met near the gates of the castle a page who requested that he would proceed to the grand hall of the castle, where the Princess surrounded by her ladies was in readiness to receive him:

* A famous place of pilgrimage, in ancient times, in Provence.

he made no reply, but on gaining the court-yard mounted his horse and galloped off with the swiftness of lightning to meet the Count of Toulouse at Paris. Blaccas quickly arrived at the place of his destination; he found the Count, and with the natural frankness of his character confessed all that was passing in his mind. He informed him that one short moment had determined his fate and that he adored Orasia. The Count's amazement was extreme: my dear Blaccas, he said, what are your expectations?—To perform the most extraordinary achievements to deserve her.—How! do you seriously imagine that any consideration can induce me to renounce an alliance with so powerful a prince as the Count de Poitiers?—Is a crown the object of your ambition? speak Seignior, I know how to gain one.—What are your rights to obtain it?—The first of all rights: courage and virtue. Did not a simple gentleman of Normandy, Tancred de Hauteville, ensure the throne of Sicily to his

descendants?... A crusade is in agitation. I will enrole myself and follow Louis, and my achievements shall throw such a lustre over my name, as will render me worthy of the happiness to which I aspire.— There is such an air of candour in your raving, replied the Count, that I cannot possibly speak to you with severity: the idea of a marriage between you and my daughter is singular indeed, and it would be as difficult to form such a union as to chain two mountains together. This whimsical comparison was by no means remarkable in the mouth of the Count, he frequently employed hyperboles of this sort. Blaccas smiled instead of appearing disheartened: my Lord, he said, those who renounce a daring hope, must submit to endure the derision of the world; but perseverance ennobles ambition and even tinges folly with an air of greatness; you shall judge whether I am inclined to be discouraged by the first obstacle. — But this obstacle is insurmountable, returned the Count. — No,

Seignior, I can overcome it. At these words the Count could not forbear smiling; though at the same time he strictly enjoined Blaccas to seek for no opportunity of beholding the Princess. Blaccas protested that far from entertaining any such design, he would cautiously avoid Orasia until his passion should be sanctioned by the Count. Raymond replied, that in that case he would never more behold her; an answer which in no way disconcerted Blaccas. The prince moreover advised him not to betray his folly to any one whatever, and Blaccas replied, that since he possessed such a confident as the Count of Toulouse, he should not readily be induced to seek another.

Blaccas quitted Paris almost immediately after this conversation. Before his departure he however had the consolation of learning with certainty that considerable difficulties had arisen in the negociations for the marriage of the Princess with the Count de Poitiers, and that if the union ever did take place it could

not possibly be consummated within the space of two years.

Blaccas proceded to his seigniory of Moustiers, about ten leagues from the castle of the Princess. Near the little city of Moustiers there were two enormous mountains, almost perpendicular and separated by a space of about two hundred and fifty feet. By a singular chance one of these mountains rose on the domain of Blaccas, and the other on the estate on which was situated the castle of the Princess Orasia. Blaccas recollecting the emphatic comparison of the Count of Toulouse, conceived with double delight the idea of uniting the two rocky-frontiers by some durable bond. This was to him at once a chivalrous enterprise, a delightful presage, and the happiest emblem that could possibly be chosen. Blaccas caused a chain of iron to be fastened to the summits of the two mountains, and as an ornament a large brazen star was suspended in the air from the middle of the chain. The device of Blaccas was a star with the words *au-*

*dessus de tout.** This device was by no means modest, but it accorded with the spirit of the age and of chivalry. Devices were intended to proclaim intentions and sentiments, and the grand object was that they should announce perfections or greatness. But Blaccas attached merely a moral interpretation to his; namely, that by his character he was *superior* to all events: but being anxious to adopt a device which might bear some relation to his love, he had a large white veil painted on his shield, beneath which were inscribed the words: † *La gloire le levera.*‡

Blaccas published a cartel challenging to single combat every knight in Pro-

* Superior to all. † Glory will raise it.

‡ The union of the two mountains by a chain, as above described, was really accomplished in ancient times by a knight of the house of Blaccas: from the middle of this chain was suspended a large silver star which forms a portion of the arms of Blaccas. This singular monument existed in one of the southern provinces of France previous to the revolution.

vence by maintaining that *his mistress,* (or as he described her, *the lady of his thoughts,*) *was the youngest, the fairest, and most perfect of all the ladies beloved throughout France and the universe.* The scene of combat was marked out by Blaccas between the two mountains which he had himself united by a chain of iron. Numbers of young and illustrious knights, equally attached to the glory of their mistresses and the success of their loves, immediately hastened to Moustiers. The combats were maintained for the space of a fortnight. Blaccas was always victorious; he displayed a degree of physical strength equal to his intrepidity, and his reputation for valour and courtesy was established on the firmest basis. Having overcome his adversaries, he invited them to his castle, watched over the wounded with the tenderest affection, and gave entertainments of the most magnificent description. These warlike festivities at once immortalized and ruined him; after all his

unheard-of exploits, he found it necessary to sell a portion of his possessions and to mortgage the rest. But he acquired considerable glory, and glory was then an increase of fortune to a knight.

Blaccas had not yet forgotten the hymn of our Lady of Beauvezer, which he had heard in the grove of lilac. The image of the holy virgin, rudely sculptured in tinted plaister, stood in an old stone niche, on a little hill fronting the gate of the city of Moustiers. Blaccas constructed between the two mountains, under the chain of iron, a pretty little chapel, to which he transported the image of our Lady of Beauvezer; thus sanctifying the spot which he had rendered illustrious by his valour.* Having completed all these undertakings, which occupied more than four months, he returned to the court of the Count of Toulouse. Finding himself alone with

* This little chapel really existed some time back, between the two mountains.

the Prince: *Well, my Lord,* he said, *I have chained two mountains together,* and you yourself declared, that the union to which I dared raise my hopes would not be more difficult to accomplish!—This was, indeed, imprudent language.—On my arrival here, I learned that the marriage with the Count de Poitiers had been broken off.—But it is in my power to renew the negociations, said the Count of Toulouse.—No, no, Seignior: on being informed that I had united two mountains, you renounced the alliance of the Count; was it not so, Seignior?—My dear Blaccas, you are at once the most extravagant and the bravest of Knights.—The bravest, Seignior! I never flattered myself with such a distinction; but since your lips pronounce me such, you declare me your son-in-law, for surely none but *the bravest* can deserve that honour.

This conversation terminated in the usual way: the Count seemed amused for a few moments with the boldness of

Blaccas, and he at length imposed silence upon him.

Blaccas remained at court during the whole of the winter. The Princess was never there: she continued to reside at her old castle, the Count being firmly resolved that she should not remove to Toulouse until the arrangements relative to her marriage were irrevocably settled. The first genial days of spring revived recollections and hopes in the mind of Blaccas; he determined on returning to Moustiers. He visited his chapel of Beauvezer, which he found enriched with a vast number of pious offerings, most of which had been sent by princesses and ladies of high rank. Among these gifts he perceived with emotion a zone and a necklace of amber, which he fancied he had seen before. He questioned his attendants on this subject, and was informed that the offering had been deposited by two ladies, the one somewhat advanced in life, and the other deeply veiled, who came attended by an old

squire to perform their devotions in the chapel; their names were, however, unknown to every one.

By this description Blaccas instantly recognized Orasia and her old squire, and concluded that the lady must be the governante of the Princess. His reflections on this subject gave rise to the most delightful hopes. The Princess was well aware, that the Knight she had seen in the grove was the intrepid Blaccas; for the page had announced his name. Orasia likewise knew that he had constructed his little chapel between the two mountains! Whilst she thus rendered a pious homage to the saint, was she not at the same time conferring an honour on the founder of the edifice?......

Blaccas did not long enjoy the charms of hope; on the day after his arrival he learnt that the Princess had finally quitted her old castle and returned to Toulouse. At these tidings the young Knight was overwhelmed with dismay: it was evident

that Orasia's marriage was again under consideration, since the Count, her father, had invited her to the court. Blaccas resolved once more to visit the castle, where he had first beheld the object of his adoration. He flew to the bower of lilac, which was again in full blossom, for it was precisely the season at which he had visited it during the preceding year. He entered the grove with indescribable agitation; he fancied he again beheld the young and fascinating beauty, the object of his ardent and romantic love. After a long and painful reverie, he turned and beheld the orange tree against which he had reclined whilst he contemplated Orasia. He gazed on it for some moments with an air of pensive melancholy, when suddenly casting his eyes towards the roots of the tree, he perceived a vase filled with *belles-de-nuit*;* he advanced and read on the

* The English names of this flower are the *marvel of Peru*, and *four o'clock flower.*

outside of the vase the following inscription :—*concealed from every eye*. He immediately concluded that this device bore a reference to the secret pilgrimage to Beauvezer, where the Princess appeared veiled. The gloom of night surprised Blaccas in the grove, which so many tender associations contributed to endear ; when suddenly recollecting himself, he prepared to depart, having first plucked one of the *belles-de-nuit* and with a sigh placed it in his bosom.

Anxious to learn his fate, whatever it might be, he quitted Moustiers and returned to Toulouse. But what afflicting tidings were in reserve for him. He was informed that a tournament was to take place in honor of the marriage of the Princess with the Count de Poitiers, and that the nuptials were positively to be celebrated on the day after the tournament. Blaccas, overwhelmed with despair, vowed never more to visit the court ; he nevertheless resolved to combat at the tournament, in the hope of

vanquishing his rival. He received visits from several Knights, most of whom had fought against him at the mountains of Beauvezer: at length there arrived one, whom circumstances had at that time prevented from accepting the challenge of Blaccas, and who proposed a private combat previous to the tournament. To this Blaccas consented, and acceded to the terms proposed by his adversary. Though every ray of hope had now vanished, his love was still unabated, and he ardently maintained that the *lady of his thoughts* was the loveliest and most perfect in the universe. His adversary was styled the Knight of the Lily, because he had chosen as his device a lily with the words: *Less fair and less pure than she!* The Knight made no secret of his mistress's name, notwithstanding her severity. She was the fair Pauline, who had about six months before returned to her native city of Toulouse; but who, as modest as she was beautiful, always appeared veiled from

head to foot. She had made a solemn vow never to raise her veil until her wedding-day; she had, however, hitherto manifested an extreme aversion to marriage, and had declined the proposals of numerous distinguished Knights, who were attracted by the fame of her extraordinary beauty. Besides, her gentleness, irreproachable reputation and talents were all equally extolled. The Knight of the Lily had seen her several times before she had made her vow, and loved her to distraction; but Pauline, insensible to all the homage she received, vainly sought to defeat a hope which the Knight obstinately persisted in entertaining. With the permission of the Sovereign it was determined, that the combat between Blaccas and the Knight of the Lily should take place on the grand place of Toulouse, in the presence of the court, the ladies of the city, and an immense concourse of people. Blaccas could have wished that she who was

the unknown object of the combat might be present to witness it; but the Princess Orasia kept herself immured within the palace. Every one knew that the fair Pauline was the mistress of the Knight of the Lily; it was even expected that she would honor with her presence the combat of her Knight: she did not however appear.

When the two knights appeared in the arena they became the objects of universal admiration; the grace and majestic deportment of Blaccas were particularly extolled. The Knight of the Lily was mounted on a superb white courser, which by a singular want of foresight he had never ridden but once before, and which he imagined was as safe as it was beautiful. He had however scarcely gallöped forward to the distance of a few yards on the place of Toulouse, when his horse was startled by a sudden flourish of trumpets and clarions, and in an instant became perfectly ungovernable. In vain

did the knight resort to every expedient which courage or address could dictate. All his efforts proved unavailing. The spirited courser darted forward and suddenly rearing was on the point of overleaping the barrier which enclosed the arena and which was only three feet in height. Shrieks of terror resounded on every side. Blaccas instantly leapt from his horse and flew to rescue the Knight of the Lily; he seized the bridle of the horse with one hand, whilst with the other he assisted his adversary in dismounting. He then grasped the flowing mane of the furious steed, and raising the animal on his shoulders, in spite of his resistance, bore him along, amidst the acclamations of the spectators who were confounded at so extraordinary a feat of courage and strength...In the ages of chivalry, however, such an achievement would have been far less remarkable than it now appears; for the physical strength of the ancient knights was so prodigious and so frequently called into action, that many

instances might be cited even more remarkable than this.*

Blaccas having conveyed his adversary's courser beyond the barrier, he resigned him to the charge of two attendants who found no difficult task to manage him, for the spirit and strength of the animal were by this time completely exhausted. The Knight of the Lily advanced to embrace Blaccas, who, having become his deliverer bore away the palm of victory, though no combat had taken place. Blaccas was conveyed in triumph to his residence : as he passed along bouquets and wreaths of flowers were dropped from the windows of the houses. In the evening, when he had retired to his apartment (which chanced to be on the ground-floor), he fancied he heard a gentle movement on the outside

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* History mentions a *M. Boufflers*, surnamed the *vigorous*, who several times performed this feat of strength. He raised an unruly horse on his shoulders, and in this manner bore it along to a distance of more than five hundred paces.

of his window, and on throwing up the casement he found, to his astonishment, a small vase filled with flowers, and encircled by a wreath of laurel. He conveyed it to the light, and with violent emotion discovered that the flowers were *belles-de-nüit.* He instantly recollected those which he had seen in the bower of lilac, with the device, *concealed from every eye.* Could this be chance, or was it a gift from the Princess? ...... But Orasia was on the eve of her marriage...... Yet why this mystery, and why so much tardiness in presenting the offering? It was evident that it was not the gift of any one who had been present at the tournament !......It might be that Orasia had sent him her favorite flower merely as a token of her admiration......These thoughts occupied his mind during the whole of the night; he found it impossible to close his eyes, and he arose with the first dawn of day. He went out to walk in a beautiful field in the vicinity of Toulouse, which was intersected by a

rapid stream. As he advanced he perceived a young lady closely veiled, who had already proceeded several paces along a small plank, with the intention of crossing to the opposite side of the torrent; she was followed by a female, apparently an inferior attendant. Blaccas instantly fancied that he once again beheld the beautiful Pauline, and he was not mistaken. On hearing the approach of footsteps she suddenly turned, and, at the sight of Blaccas, trembled and fell. Her attendant, frantic with despair, uttered the most dreadful shrieks. Blaccas plunged into the water, caught Pauline in his arms, and bore her in safety from the torrent. Pauline, who had been but a few seconds in her perilous situation, was not entirely insensible. She expressed her gratitude in a tone of voice, the enchanting sweetness of which penetrated the very soul of the youthful Knight. She invited him to accompany her to her mother's residence, which was but a short distance from the spot, a proposi-

tion to which Blaccas readily acceded. Though the veil which Pauline wore was completely wet, she gathered the folds so closely over her face, that it was impossible to distinguish a single feature. On arriving at the residence of Pauline, Blaccas, with extreme astonishment, recognised in her mother the lady whose life he had saved in the forest adjoining the Princess Orasia's castle. It was Doralice herself, who shed tears of joy on finding that her valiant deliverer was likewise the preserver of her daughter.

Pauline withdrew in order to change her dress; and the Knight was conducted to an apartment, where clothes and linen were provided for him. In ancient times it was considered a duty of hospitality, always to keep clothes in readiness for travellers who might require them. On his return to the hall, where Doralice was waiting to receive him, Blaccas again saw Pauline, though still closely covered with a veil. She stepped forward to present him with a golden

cup filled with hydromel, prepared by her own hands. Blaccas gracefully apologized for having accepted a challenge from a Knight who combated in her cause, adding: I had not at that time, Madam, enjoyed the delight of beholding you......I have no Knight, Sir, replied Pauline; if any one fights for me it is without my consent, and I assure you I am now less than ever disposed to grant such a privilege. Doralice asked Blaccas whether he had inscribed his name as one of the combatants for the tournament? He replied that he had. Then, said she, turning to Pauline, we must present our liberator with some tokens of our gratitude:—a portion of our dress, or whatever he may chuse to accept:—the lady whom you serve will not, I am certain, be offended at that, it is a right to which your generosity and our gratitude equally entitle us. I shall be proud, replied Blaccas, to wear such marks of honor on the day of combat; and then, after a moment's reflection,

he requested that Doralice would be pleased to grant him a bracelet of fair hair which she wore on her arm. She instantly unclasped it, saying, it is formed from a lock of my daughter's hair. I guessed so, said the Knight, whilst with evident emotion he received the bracelet, which brought to his recollection the beautiful tresses of Orasia. Blaccas then turned to the fair Pauline, and requested her veil, for he burned with curiosity to see her countenance. Pauline, without hesitation, complied with his demand; she instantly untied her veil, but discovered only her elegant and perfect figure. A second veil, of smaller size, completely concealed her countenance. Blaccas heaved a sigh, and dropped on his knee to receive the present: I swear, he said, by my honor, that on the day of combat I will wear neither cuirass nor shield; this veil shall be my sole defence...... Oh, Heavens! exclaimed Pauline, what do I hear, Seignior—can you be serious —to fight without a cuirass or shield,

and for my sake!......I have sworn so to do, replied Blaccas, and you know Madam, that a Knight can never retract his oath. But be not apprehensive for my safety, beautiful Pauline, this precious veil is to me a pledge of victory.—Oh, I conjure you, Seignior, do not go to the tournament.—But I have sworn to enter the lists, and therefore nothing can prevent me. Pauline was silent, but she hung down her head with an air of sadness, and was heard to heave a sigh. —See, Madam, pursued Blaccas, how by a singular chance this incident accords with my armorial bearings. I have chosen as my device a veil resembling this, with the words: *La gloire le levera.* I am resolved to present myself at the tournament, entirely covered with this veil; I shall be victorious, and shall then, at least, have acquired the right of raising it; but of that right I will not avail myself......It is sufficient if my triumph be known to you......And to your lady, likewise? said Pauline, in a

low and trembling voice. Alas, replied Blaccas, I love without hope!......It is true, I attached a particular signification to my device! I flattered myself that glory would one day entitle me to declare a passion which has hitherto been cherished in concealment......but adverse fate condemns me to eternal silence!......Thus, Madam, I shall not only fight for love, I shall combat in the cause of honor and friendship; this veil of modesty and virtue shall be my shield, and your approval is the reward I hope to enjoy. Ah! Seignior, returned Pauline, it will be vain to conceal your person beneath the folds of a veil; who can fail to recognise you?.......your exploits will proclaim your name.

During this conversation the eyes of Blaccas were rivetted on the graceful figure and delicately formed hands of the fair Pauline. He could not divest himself of the idea that he was once more in the presence of the Princess. He beheld the whiteness of her skin,

the symmetry of her form, and her courtly demeanor. Without having seen her face, he was convinced that every feature must correspond with those of Orasia; how could she be so perfectly beautiful without resembling her? This idea had taken such firm possession of his mind, that when, notwithstanding the thickness of Pauline's veil, he occasionally caught an imperfect glimpse of the outline of her countenance, his imagination immediately traced in it a close resemblance to that of Orasia. An irresistible charm pervaded every object around him. In the evening he took leave of Doralice and Pauline, but the image of the latter had become so perfectly identified with Orasia, that it was impossible to think separately on either. His visits were daily repeated, and in proportion as he became more and more attached to Doralic and her lovely daughter, he answered their enquiries with the greater confidence. On the evening preceding the tournament, Pauline appeared re-

markably dejected and melancholy; she once more conjured Blaccas not to enter the lists, since he persisted in his determination to fight without either cuirass or shield. Blaccas repeated all that he had said before, and Pauline found that all her entreaties were unavailing. Doralice enquired whether the passion which rendered Blaccas so wretched had been of long duration? He replied, that it took birth on the very day on which he had the happiness to deliver her from the hands of the banditti in the forest.—How, interrupted the latter, was it in the castle of the Princess?—I beheld Orasia, Madam......that is a sufficient answer.—Orasia!......where did you see her?—In one of the groves in the park; out of respect to the Prince, her father, I did not venture to address her; but the moment I quitted her presence, I swore to devote my life to her service.... Oh, noble and virtuous Knight! exclaimed Doralice, embracing Blaccas with the tenderest emotion. At this moment,

Pauline, with extreme agitation, seized her mother's hand, kissed it, and pressed it to her bosom.

Blaccas now rose to take his leave; Pauline wished to bid him adieu, but the word expired upon her lips. At this moment a rose accidentally fell from her bosom; Blaccas stooped to pick it up, and found it bathed in tears: he placed it next his heart, and silently withdrew. The Knight returned home overwhelmed with affliction. Before he retired to rest, he as usual sprinkled some water on his *belles-de-nuit;* but what was his surprise on finding a piece of paper fastened to the vase with the following inscription: *Concealed from every eye*......but can I be hidden from yours?

Heavens! exclaimed Blaccas, with amazement, this must be Orasia's device!.... It is evident that these flowers are her gift, and she seems to reproach me for having cherished the shadow of a doubt!.... Yes, I am beloved!.... But is this the moment for such a confession!

Good heaven, within two days she must become the wife of the Count de Poitiers! But before that time I trust I shall vanquish my rival !....

Blaccas, whose agitation was now more violent than ever, enjoyed not a moment's rest; during the whole of the night his thoughts were alternately occupied with the charming Orasia and the mysterious and captivating Pauline. On the following morning he arose and covered himself with Pauline's veil, which conceiled his face and the greater part of his figure; he however confined the folds, by a broach set with precious stones, above his right arm which was uncovered and adorned with the bracelet he had received from Doralice. He fastened to his formidable lance a bouquet of the *belles-de-nuit*, and thus equipped mounted a horse magnificently harnessed, and proceeded to the scene of combat. There he learned two circumstances which deeply afflicted him: first, that Orasia would not be present at the

tournament nor appear to distribute the rewards; secondly, that the Count de Poitiers was prevented from entering the lists, as affairs of state compelled him to remain at Paris, and that he was not expected at Toulouse within seven or eight days. Blaccas looked anxiously round for the beautiful Pauline. Superbly decorated platforms erected on every side, were thronged with the ladies of the court and all the individuals of rank in the city and its environs; but the fair object of his search was no where to be seen!....

When Blaccas appeared in the arena, he excited among the spectators more curiosity than surprise, for the ancient knights were accustomed to adopt the most eccentric proofs of gallantry. At the tournament Blaccas exposed himself to indescribable perils; but being free from the encumbrance of heavy armour, he enjoyed an immense advantage over his ponderous adversaries; for the free exercise of prodigious strength, address

and agility, was in no way impeded. No sooner had he manœuvred his horse and entered the lists, than his name was echoed on every side, as the fair Pauline had herself foretold. Animated by the acclamations of the spectators and the universal enthusiasm he inspired, he performed prodigies of valour: he seemed to be mounted on a winged horse, and to sport with the vain efforts of his adversaries, who found it impossible either to reach him or parry his thrusts. His courser, full of ardour under so light a burthen, seemed to fly like Pegasus, whilst his terrible lance possessed the power of the club of Hercules. He disarmed, unhorsed, and vanquished all his rivals; he did not receive a single wound. Towards the close of the combats, however, his veil was torn, and his long and flowing hair and majestic countenance were discovered to the eyes of the transported spectators. Blaccas was solemnly conducted to the palace to receive the reward of his valour. But he

was no longer the daring warrior whose intrepidity and dignified deportment had so recently been the subject of unanimous admiration; he was about to present himself to Orasia, and that thought filled him with dismay. He was conducted through an extensive suite of apartments; and on reaching the end of a long gallery he started with a mingled emotion of astonishment and delight: he heard the well-known strains of the hymn of our lady of Beauvezer proceeding from the door of a small cabinet; he recognized the melodious voice of Orasia and the tones of her lute!......The voice ceased, a door was thrown open, and he was shewn into a small apartment; there he was requested to remain, and the attendants withdrew. Amazed, confounded, he knew not what to think; was Orasia to receive him in secrecy? But that was impossible on an occasion of such peculiar solemnity. How could she possibly evade the vigilance of her father and the courtiers by whom she

was surrounded? But why were not the usual ceremonies observed? Why had he not been conducted at once to the grand audience hall? Why this inexplicable mystery and solitude? He was buried in these reflections, when he heard some one enter the apartment, and on turning beheld Doralice and her daughter......The fair Pauline held in her hands a long and magnificent chain studded with precious stones, and advancing towards the Knight, the Princess, she said, has charged me to present you with this reward of valour...... How, interrupted Blaccas, shall I not see her?......No, Seignior,......Contrary to all the laws of chivalry, does she then refuse to present me with the prize destined for the conqueror?......Seignior, replied Doralice, she imagined that you would be more gratified by receiving it from my daughter's hands. The feeling of gallantry so natural to a knight prevented Blaccas from making

any reply. He sunk into a chair and covered his face with his hands.

Seignior, pursued Doralice, after the honor you have conferred on my daughter, by entering the lists covered with her veil, she cannot do less than raise, in your presence, that which now conceals her countenance......No, madam, replied Blaccas, drily, I am unworthy of such a favour, I do not deserve that Pauline should break her vow for my sake. It is true she has sworn never to raise her veil but in the presence of her husband! And, therefore, I may now throw it aside, said Pauline: Seignior, continued she, know that you have never yet seen Orasia and recognize Pauline......With these words her veil fell to the ground, and the happy Blaccas discovered in the fair Pauline her whom he had so long adored under the name of Orasia. Who can describe the excess of his joy and surprise? He threw himself at the feet of Pauline, and expressed

himself in all the transports of a passion which until that moment had been so cautiously concealed: he then solicited an explanation, and Pauline informed him that having been brought up in the old castle with Orasia, she had always, by express desire of the Princess, worn a dress exactly similar to hers. Your page, continued she, saw the Princess, who was in the bower of lilac playing on her lute, when he was conducted to her presence. On the departure of the page, she proceeded to the palace in order to grant you an audience, and I entered the bower, where you first saw me; for the squire, who is deaf and nearly blind with age, was not aware that Orasia had quitted the garden. Whilst you were hastening from the park, a messenger was dispatched to overtake you, and strange to say, you absolutely refused to return to the castle to see the Princess, a circumstance which I assure you gave rise to no very favourable opinion of your courtesy. Finally, my complexion

is fair like that of the Princess, I wore a dress in all respects resembling hers, I was in the grove where your page left her, and thus all the circumstances of our interview gave rise to the singular mistake under which you have so long laboured.

Allow me, said Doralice, to add a few words to this explanation: you, Seignior, made so deep an impression on her heart, that in spite of her attachment for the Princess she could not venture to tell her she had seen you; her good sense and modesty always led her to regard the singularity of your conduct as the mere effect of a romantic disposition, but she could never banish your image from her recollection: from that moment she resolved never to marry, and to keep her person concealed from every eye; she covered herself with a veil, and being determined to wear it until her death, she vowed never to raise it but in the presence of her husband. On hearing that you had erected

a chapel to our lady of Beauvezer, she determined to undertake a pilgrimage in order to present her offerings to the saint. When she unexpectedly saw you on the bank of the torrent, she was seized with the most violent agitation, and unable to support herself fell into the water. As you will readily guess, it was she who found means to deposit on your chamber window the vase with the *Belles de Nuit,* which she had chosen as her device......After your second visit, she unfolded her heart to me, though I already entertained some suspicion of the truth: at my instigation she likewise disclosed her secret to the Princess, who advised her not to make herself known until after the tournament, and then only in the way she might direct. We therefore remained silent, and when on the day preceding the tournament you made us acquainted with your history, you released us from every doubt. Orasia not wishing to undeceive you until the proper moment, declined ap-

pearing in public. The amiable Princess has herself made every necessary preparation for your marriage, which is to be celebrated tomorrow in the chapel of the palace.

Blaccas listened to this recital with the most impassioned gratitude, and all the transports of the purest delight.

On the following day the valiant Blaccas received the hand of the fair Pauline. Both were overwhelmed with the favours of the Count of Toulouse and the Princess Orasia. Their nuptials were celebrated with royal magnificence, and every one confessed that there never was a more suitable union; since it was but just that the bravest and most loyal of Knights should be rewarded by the choice of the most modest and most perfect beauty.

ZENEIDA,

OR

IDEAL PERFECTION.

ZENEIDA,

OR

IDEAL PERFECTION.

A MORAL TALE.

THE virtuous Telamon, King of the Happy Island, had reigned for the space of twelve years over a grateful and tranquil people; the arts, sciences, agriculture, and commerce flourished within his dominions: he was beloved and respected by neighbouring sovereigns and adored by his subjects. One thing only was wanting to complete his happiness, he was childless; but at length Heaven was pleased to listen to his prayers, and his Queen became a mother. She was delivered of a Princess, at whose birth, according to custom, all the fairies attended on the invitation of the Queen.

The Queen, who had made history her peculiar study, did not commit the error, at that time so common among Princesses, of forgetting to invite some sprite more mischievous than all the rest; she well knew that the fairy Altemine was her enemy, and consequently she had for several months used every endeavour to appease and reconcile her. Altemine did not indeed possess the rude malignity of the fairies Carabossa and Grognon; but she was not on that account the less dangerous. Her science surpassed that of every other fairy. She was vindictive, haughty, and deceitful, and had rendered vengeance a perfidious and dreadful art, which her singular hypocrisy daily brought nearer to perfection. She always contrived to impart to her revenge an appearance of generosity and elevation of mind. She mortally detested the fairy Canzade, the intimate friend of the Queen, whose power was very inferior to her own, but

whose prudence and penetration she had reason to dread.

As soon as the Queen was delivered, the royal infant, who was named Zeneida, was placed on a cushion of velvet, embroidered with pearls and precious stones; the doors of the apartment were thrown open, the fairies entered and approached the Queen's bed in order to endow the Princess.

The Queen trembled at the sight of Altemine; she however assumed a smiling air, and received her with infinite grace and respect. Altemine being the eldest and most learned of the assembly was entitled to the privilege of speaking first. She however advanced, and addressing the fairy Canzade: you are the Queen's friend, she said, I therefore resign my supremacy; proceed to endow the Princess, I will speak when your task is at an end. This generous proposal excited the astonishment of all present. Canzade looked steadfastly on Altemine, and the Queen shed tears of

joy. Canzade accordingly endowed Zeneida with all that could ensure happiness to a woman and glory to a Princess. Some historians affirm that she began by conferring on her the charms of grace and beauty; others, on the contrary, declâre, (and we readily believe the assertion,) that she first of all inspired her with sensibility, gratitude, generosity, and good nature. At length the fairy Altemine advanced with an emphatic air; I, she said, raise to the utmost degree of perfection all the gifts which Canzade has bestowed on this infant; Zeneida shall be the fairest Princess in the universe, and at the same time the most sensible and generous; to these brilliant qualifications I add the possession of every talent, aptitude for the acquisition of science, prodigious memory, superior wit, sublime eloquence, vast and profound genius.......Ah! this is too much, exclaimed Canzade. The Queen, who was listening with rapture to every word that fell from Altemine, ma-

nifested the utmost displeasure at this interruption. Imagining that Canzade was jealous of the power of Altemine, and that friendship had not yet superseded this reprehensible feeling, the Queen expressed her indignation in terms of the bitterest reproach. Canzade heaved a sigh, and rose to quit the apartment: she advanced towards the infant, and with a look of compassion exclaimed, poor Princess!—These words excited the laughter of all present; Canzade withdrew, and the Queen indignantly protested that she would never see her more. Altemine again turned towards the Queen: my task is not yet fulfilled, said she; it is my intention not merely to endow the Princess with every known perfection, she shall likewise possess ideal excellence. Her voice, more melodious than the syrens, shall enchant the ear, whether she speak, sing, or declaim; her breath, more delicious than the perfume of the jasmin or the rose, shall embalm the surrounding air; light

as Zephir and the Graces, she shall exceed in swiftness the antelope and the gazelle; whenever she stirs abroad, hills and mountains shall bow down before her; trees, though withered, shall resume their blossoms, flower-buds expand at her approach, and immense carpets of verdure shall spread beneath her footsteps. With these words the fairy drew from a case of gold filigree a small wand, richly studded with diamonds, and touching the Princess, said, the charm is complete!...In a moment the little form of Zeneida was suffused with the most dazzling beauty, and her breath shed delightful perfume through the apartment. The Queen, in a transport of joy, was on the point of rising from her couch to throw herself at the feet of the fairy: her attendants found it difficult to repress this manifestation of her gratitude. You see, Madam, said Altemine, that you had no reason to dread my enmity! I had, it is true, ample cause to be offended with you; but it is thus that Al-

temine takes her revenge. The fairy then withdrew, leaving the Queen and all present overwhelmed with delight, and bestowing enthusiastic eulogiums on her magnanimity. The King and Queen spent the remainder of the day in admiring Zeneida, whose beauty might fairly be regarded as a prodigy: the Queen passed the whole night in this sweet contemplation; she never closed her eyes, but what repose is so delightful as the restlessness occasioned by maternal joy!......

The genius, talent, and charms of the Princess quickly realized the promises of the fairy; at the age of eighteen she was the most distinguished poet in Asia, and had already published several admirable works on science, morals, and politics: the grandees of the state proposed that she should revise and correct the code of laws; but this task she declined, observing that the public morals were good and the people happy. She added, that when all proceeded well in a state,

the results of experience should be preferred to the most brilliant speculations. She was of opinion that happiness, which is the friend of order, is likewise the friend of routine, and that all which tends to interrupt its customs injures or destroys it.

The superior beauty, talent, and grace of the Princess, were so striking and incontestable, that they never excited jealousy. Even the most presumptuous never entertained an idea of rivalry; they envied her existence, but never attempted to dispute her pre-eminence. Her suffrage excited the most lively emulation, and her censure, always gentle and polished, was a sentence without appeal, which was in every instance cheerfully submitted to. Zeneida, by the purity of her taste, brought to perfection the literature of her father's subjects; during the reign of Telamon, bombast was never confounded with sublimity, nor extravagance with originality. No work destitute of reason, clearness,

and nature, ever enjoyed reputation. Zeneida rendered the same services to the arts: pictures no longer presented false colouring, forced expression, mannered attitudes, and mean or confused compositions; by endeavouring to attain simplicity, painters did not contract the heaviness of the Etruscan models; draperies were light without being flimsy, and magnificent without appearing heavy; every style of art was either noble and touching, smiling and graceful, or terrible and majestic. No caricatures ever appeared, for the Princess entertained a particular aversion for those ignoble and despicable productions, the false gaiety of which consists in hideous grimace, and where the utmost exaggeration of malignity constitutes the principal merit. Zeneida displayed admirable skill on every musical instrument; but she preferred the harp to all others. It may well be supposed that she enjoyed the full use of her ten fingers, that she performed entire sonatas in *suoni armonichi*, and that

the execution of her left hand was as perfect as that of her right; she was fond of learned music, because ingenious and bold combinations always produce novel effects; but she required that even learned music should be replete with melody and expression.

The court of the Happy Island was as amiable as it was brilliant. The magical perfection of the Princess banished every kind of flattery. It was impossible to exaggerate in praising Zeneida. She was admired in silence, and she totally extinguished the ambition of coquetry. At that court, the heart might indeed wish for individual approbation; but vanity could never aspire to universal success or dazzling conquests. No lover ventured to tell his mistress that she was the fairest and most perfect of women; it was sufficient if he complimented her sentiments. The language of love became that of friendship; and love itself, divested of all enthusiasm, and no longer enveloped in illusion, exhibited neither

transports nor violence; it was simply a preference determined by sympathy, and being less ardent and dangerous it was the more durable. All the females of the court were simple and unaffected, and consequently pleasing; they possessed all the grace and elegance which is acquired by intercourse with the great world, and their conversation was replete with charms, though they themselves never manifested the least desire to shine.

There was at King Telamon's court a young princess named Azerolla, who, but for Zeneida, would have been remarkable for her wit and beauty. Zeneida, however, eclipsed all around her, and Azerolla seemed only a person of the ordinary cast. Zeneida, too modest to compare herself with others, was fully sensible of Azerolla's merit. She anxiously wished to enjoy her friendship; but friendship requires a certain equality. Though Azerolla admired Zeneida, yet she occasionally felt somewhat mortified

by her superiority. She dreaded lest she should weary her patience by discoursing on the little interests of society which occupied her own mind. She delighted to hear her converse, though she scarcely dared venture to make an observation in her presence. She was particularly careful to avoid private conversations with the princess, for she then experienced the most insupportable restraint: Zeneida, said she, must think me intolerably stupid and ignorant. Azerolla attributed all the kind attentions of Zeneida merely to her indulgent temper. All the grace and sensibility of the Princess were insufficient to subdue this inconceivable prejudice and timidity. Zeneida, profoundly afflicted, was at length compelled to seek another friend. All the ladies of the court vied with each other for the honour of fixing her choice; but the Princess was endowed with such exquisite sensibility and delicacy, that she found none whose sentiments corresponded with her own. The tenderness

of the Queen was her solace under all these mortifications, for no heart can be superior to a mother's.

All the neighbouring Princes were ambitious to obtain the hand of so celebrated and accomplished a Princess; and they successively visited, incognito, the court of King Telamon. Zeneida was as fastidious in the choice of a husband as she was indulgent in society. She refused, without hesitation, the most brilliant offers, and the Queen, though deeply afflicted, observed, that no mortal was worthy of her, and that she must consequently remain unmarried! Almost all the potentates of Asia, burning with a hopeless passion for the incomparable Zeneida, formed a powerful coalition, the chief object of which was to invade the Happy Island, and to force the Princess to choose a husband from among them. The reader will recollect that the Fairy Canzade quarrelled with the Queen on the day Zeneida was born, because she was of opinion that Altemine had

rendered the Princess too perfect. Canzade was the protectress of the beautiful kingdom of Cachemire, and more particularly of its youthful sovereign Omasis, with whose education she had been entrusted, and who had recently ascended the throne. Omasis possessed neither the genius, the vast erudition, nor the enchanting talents of Zeneida; but a noble and interesting person, a cultivated understanding, a generous soul, and a disposition replete with frankness and gaiety, rendered the Prince one of the most amiable and accomplished gentlemen of his age. The fairy had sought to render him superior to other men, only by his elevated mind, acute understanding, and excellent disposition; she had been careful not to exalt imprudently his natural susceptibility. She had even rendered him capable of subduing it, whenever justice, duty, or his own repose rendered such a sacrifice necessary. The brilliant reputation of Zeneida soon reached his ears: he burned with desire to place himself

among the number of her suitors; but he was prevented from fulfilling this wish by the lingering indisposition of the King, his father; and, finally, after the death of that Prince, by the embarrassments and numerous affairs which always attend the commencement of a reign. In the course of a few months he unexpectedly learnt that the rejected lovers of Zeneida had leagued together, and declared war against the King of the Happy Island. Omasis immediately formed the generous resolution of becoming the defender of the Princess. He publicly announced his intention by dispatching ambassadors to King Telamon and the confederate Princes. This magnanimous proceeding, in favour of a Princess whom he had never yet seen, made a deep impression on the mind of Zeneida: she had frequently heard of the Prince of Cachemere; all Asia extolled his amiable disposition, his talent, and his virtues; and Zeneida, on finding her father's court thronged with so many

foreign Princes, frequently felt astonished that Omasis had never presented himself. She had long expected him, and that was as much as to wish for him.

Omasis levied a superb army, and fitted out a fleet to join the forces of King Telamon; but before he proceeded to the court of the Happy Island he marched to oppose the confederate Princes, gave them battle several times, and obtained the most brilliant victories. He sunk or dispersed their vessels, killed their principal chiefs, and in a single campaign annihilated their formidable armament. He then landed on the Happy Island, amidst the acclamations of thousands. The most splendid fetes were prepared for his arrival. Omasis, however, saw no object but Zeneida; she surpassed all the most perfect images that his fancy had hitherto created; his enthusiasm equalled his astonishment. The Princess, on whose heart he had already made a deep impression, thanked him with all her grace, sensibility, and elo-

quence. Omasis, who had never before listened to such enchanting language, was lost in wonder!......But his admiration increased when he saw the pictures painted by the Princess, when he heard her sing and play on the harp, and when, in the course of conversation, he learnt the surprising extent of her information and judgment. Splendid balls were given at the court; Omasis danced with exquisite grace, but on observing Zeneida he was unable to execute a single step. The rest of the company, and particularly the ladies, discouraged by the exquisite dancing of the Princess, contented themselves with merely gliding through the figures of the country-dances; for thus they always danced when she was present. Zeneida executed with astonishing precision the most difficult steps and pirouettes; her feet seemed scarcely to touch the ground: every motion, every attitude was replete with elasticity, grace, and airiness. Omasis, transported with admiration and love,

adored Zeneida in silence: he could find no terms to describe what he felt, and was always afraid to speak, lest he should not express himself in language sufficiently polished. Besides, after the services he had rendered to the state, and particularly to the Princess, there would perhaps have been a want of delicate feeling in declaring his passion at that moment: he did not wish that her choice should be determined by gratitude; and besides, when he compared himself to Zeneida, he dared not hope for a return of love. The genius and talent of the Princess were indeed infinitely superior to his; but why should love seek equality, which it so naturally establishes? Always enveloped in illusion, when approximating distances of every kind it never imagines itself descending: the sacrifices of love cost no effort; they are sought for and willingly made. If there be generosity, there is no consciousness of it; this passion gives birth to actions which are neither determined by reason

nor dictated by duty. Zeneida, already predisposed by gratitude, yielded to sentiments which she had never before experienced; these sentiments were indeed sanctioned by her parents, and she cherished them with all the energy of the most exalted sensibility. Omasis frequently accompanied her on delightful rural promenades; he beheld with transport beautiful carpets of verdure unfold themselves beneath her feet, and flowers spread forth their blossoms as she advanced; whenever she spoke his admiration was increased, though he remained either wholly silent or returned only monosyllabic replies. Zeneida, however, knew how to interpret this silence by the expression of his countenance; according as the signs of his admiration were more or less impassioned she measured the delicacy of his mind, and found that he possessed one of a superior order. It was thus she judged of all around her, for none ever ventured to discourse freely with her; laconic replies and occasional

exclamations of astonishment were all she could obtain. Had not the Princess possessed inexhaustible resources in her brilliant genius and imagination she must frequently have sunk into lassitude, for she had no notion of the charms of conversation and intimate society; but she spoke for whole hours with so much eloquence, her ideas were at once so luminous, novel and profound, that without any feeling of vanity she was pleased with her own perfection, as the singer listens with delight to the melodious strains of his own voice, or the performer to the tones of an instrument on which he plays with proficiency.

When the astonishment occasioned by so many wonders had in some measure diminished, the King of Cachemere began gradually to reflect, and his self-love insensibly abated his enthusiasm and his passion. Eternally to admire, without any hope of return, is a wearisome occupation, particularly to Princes. After a fortnight of enchantment and delight, Omasis felt convinced that an everlast-

ing monologue, however sublime, is far less attractive than a frivolous but animated dialogue, where each interlocutor freely jokes, and even talks nonsense in his turn. The profound attention which was due to the eloquent discourses of the Princess at length fatigued him. He never quitted her without an insupportable head-ach, and as, during their interviews he was always dissatisfied with himself, he became by degrees less charmed with her. By way of recreation, he frequently spent his evenings at the residence of the Princess Azerolla. He there found assembled the most agreeable society of the court; conversation was maintained without pretension, and with spirit and good humour. Omasis charmed all present, but particularly Azerolla, by the delicacy and vivacity of his wit; and he seemed to enjoy for the first time in his life the pleasure of being applauded. Omasis found these parties so agreeable, that even in the society of Zeneida he anxiously awaited

the hour of their commencement. Azerolla, on the other hand, was delighted whenever he appeared; she frequently prepared for his amusement a little ball, where every one danced cheerfully and in the best way they could. Omasis always bore away the palm of superiority, and he found these balls infinitely preferable to the splendid entertainments of the court. At Azerolla's parties music frequently constituted the entertainment of the evening, but all the fine instruments which Zeneida had brought to perfection were banished; only the dulcimer, guitar, pipe, tabor, &c. were introduced: instead of *cantabiles*, scenas, and bravuras, little popular airs and romances were selected. The simplicity and gaiety of these concerts charmed Omasis, and for the sake of enjoying this society, he gradually abridged the time which he was accustomed to pass at the court. One day, having missed the hour he had appointed for attending Zeneida on her promenade, he proposed

walking abroad in company with Azerolla. Ah, sir, said the latter with a smile, I cannot promise to conduct you over carpets of velvet......So much the better, replied the Prince. You must, continued she, be content to admire simple nature without enchantment...... No, charming Azerolla, not without enchantment when I am near you.—I possess no magical power, sir.—But you possess the power of pleasing.—And you, sir, are gifted with the art of inspiring confidence and friendship...... Sentiments so pure must always be reciprocal, replied the Prince......At these words Azerolla was on the point of undesignedly disclosing the secret of her heart, but some one happened to enter the apartment; and though friendship was the subject of conversation, Azerolla blushed and was silent. She conducted Omasis to a picturesque spot, amidst rocks, woods, and water-falls. Ah! exclaimed the Prince with transport, do I again behold sand and gravel! To say

the truth, I am somewhat tired of that eternal carpet of verdure and flowers!... It is certainly charming, but hills and rocks have their value also!......

Omasis displayed his courage and agility in ascending the rocks and climbing the highest trees: Azerolla and he seated themselves on the banks of a rivulet, chatted together, repeated a thousand follies, and did not separate until the evening. Omasis, on returning to the palace, was convinced that exalted genius and the perfection of talent are only essential in great occasions, but that in the ordinary occurrences of life, simplicity, candid gaiety, confidence, and equality, are infinitely more charming and desirable. These reflections gave rise to others. Omasis found that Zeneida's conversation, though highly instructive, was not very agreeable, because it was destitute of all reciprocal communication of ideas, sentiments, and opinions. He was always certain before hand that she would support better than

than any one else whatever was just and true, and that she would always be successful in opposing an error; consequently he never felt inclined to enter into a discussion with her, or to express ideas which she must have regarded as trivial or erroneous. Even Zeneida's beauty became by degrees less dazzling in the eyes of Omasis: her beauty was indeed celestial, but monotonous and never animated by gaiety. The Princess, on her part, became daily more and more dejected; she possessed too much penetration, and loved Omasis too well not to have remarked his increasing indifference. She knew that he was in the habit of visiting Azerolla, and she one evening determined unexpectedly to join the party. As she approached the apartment in which the company were assembled, her ears were saluted with loud bursts of laughter, and she plainly distinguished the voice of Omasis: a feeling of jealousy, which she now for the first time experienced, threw

her into a violent agitation!......She entered, and with a single glance perceived the disagreeable emotions which her presence excited: the laughing instantly ceased, a sombre cloud seemed to obscure every countenance, Azerolla blushed, and the King of Cashemere was embarrassed: respect, far from disguising these unpleasant impressions, served only to render them the more palpable; but when respect is substituted for sentiment, it is always aukward, cold, and constrained. Zeneida, mortified, humbled, and profoundly distressed, understood all, and instantly perceived the full extent of her misfortune. She looked on Azerolla with astonishment, and she judged her, if not unjustly, at least with severity; she blushed to think on her own mediocrity; Azerolla was her rival, and a rival preferred!......After a short visit Zeneida, overwhelmed with affliction, rose and took her leave.

Azerolla had but too well observed the agonizing emotion of the Princess: to

inspire Zeneida with jealousy was in her eyes a singular triumph; vanity increased her natural attachment for Omasis, and her hopes became boundless. There was at the court of the Happy Island a Prince whom, before the arrival of Omasis, Azerolla had admitted as her suitor. Thamir (such was his name) having vainly pressed Azerolla for a decided answer, now appealed to the King of Cachemire, and conjured him to become a mediator in his behalf. This was a solicitation which Omasis could not refuse; he spoke to Azerolla in favour of Thamir, but she listened with indifference, and at length positively declared that she would never marry him. And why? inquired Omasis.—That is my secret, she replied.—But you promised me your confidence......—I cannot explain myself on this point; I shall always be your friend, but you can never become my confidant.—Then, Azerolla, you do not love as I do.—Alas! I know that but too well!......Here she suddenly checked

herself, blushed, and cast down her eyes. Omasis gazed on her with tenderness; then, after a short pause, he said: Let me at least know whether your heart be at ease?......That I leave you to guess, she replied......I dare not venture to do so......You risk nothing in the attempt. —Omasis!......what do you say?—Instead of replying, the Prince threw himself at her feet. What a triumph for the heart and for vanity! Azerolla loved Omasis, and he well knew that he was beloved by Zeneida!......Azerolla expressed her sentiments and her astonishment with all the charms of sincerity and all the enthusiasm of love. The most animated and tender discourse succeeded this unforeseen declaration, when Omasis suddenly exclaimed: Heavens! but what will Zeneida think of me!...... How! returned Azerolla, you are not bound by any vows to her. True, replied the Prince, I never made any declaration of my passion; but she has, notwithstanding, every reason to suppose

I adore her. Oh! no doubt she thinks so, and most certainly loves you; but what then?—you are bound by no promises; you violate no compact; and you may, if you please, keep the secret within your own bosom.—If Zeneida love me I shall be the author of her unhappiness. ......But she likewise loves the arts, and with enthusiasm; she excells in all: poetry, music, and painting will divert her; her harp and her pencils will prove her consolation; whilst I, Omasis, if you forsake me, have no resource but my dulcimer and my castagnets. Besides, I can only fill up rhymed-endings and unriddle charades; these are excellent consolations when one is overwhelmed with melancholy. The little talent I possess must be cultivated amidst cheerfulness and gaiety; it has no romantic ardour, and can never be united with the misery of a hopeless passion; Zeneida's genius, on the contrary, will procure glory, and glory, I have heard say, will compensate for the want of happiness.' Omasis

smiled; he thought Azerolla charming, and was amused and delighted with her conversation. Yet whenever he mentioned Zeneida, the divine figure of the Princess presented itself to his imagination. He recollected all her perfections, and his agitated heart was divided between sympathy and admiration. He was unable to account for the preference he granted to Azerolla; whilst, on the other hand, he suffered himself to be subdued by the attachment he entertained for her.

In the meanwhile the superior penetration of Zeneida easily enabled her to ascertain all that was passing in the mind of Omasis. She well knew that it was in her power, if she chose, to triumph over her rival; but on reflection she was convinced that she could never ensure the happiness of Omasis, and that he would always prefer the society in which he could bear a distinguished part to that in which his self-love compelled him to be silent. The Princess confided

all her sorrows to the Queen her mother, whose surprize equalled her indignation on being informed that Omasis could hesitate to chuse between Zeneida and Azerolla. Alas! it is but too true, said the Princess, whilst she shed a deluge of tears. Oh! cruel fairy! continued she, why did you endow me with this fatal superiority, which has for ever robbed me of the gift of pleasing, and the happiness of being beloved! Why did I not conceal the dangerous advantage of excelling all who approached me? but it is too late, Omasis cannot now be deceived! My desire to please him has only produced the irreparable misfortune of having humbled his self-love. The Princess expressed herself in a strain of eloquence of which no historian can convey an idea; but such were her sentiments and her thoughts.

The Queen, overwhelmed with despair, solicited the advice of Canzade, and the beneficent fairy without hesitation hastened to her assistance: Canzade was

generous; she beheld the Queen in affliction, and instead of uttering a syllable of reproach she gave her the warmest assurances of her friendship.

Canzade wished to consult Zeneida before she addressed herself to the King of Cachemere; her astonishment was extreme, when the Princess declared that she had irrevocably renounced all idea of marriage. Canzade vainly endeavoured to change her resolution, by assuring her that Omasis was in reality sincerely attached to her. No, no, replied Zeneida, I have too much delicacy and pride to suffer myself to be loved in this way; I know that the cruel fairy, who thus exalted my sensibility, at the same time endowed me with unalterable constancy; I know that I shall always love Omasis, but he can never be my husband; I will immediately write to Azerolla to inform her that I approve of her union with Omasis, for which I will obtain the consent of the King my father. For my own part, I am re-

solved to travel unknown to all the world, and I conjure you, good Canzade, to furnish me with the means of doing so.

The resolution of the Princess was unalterably fixed; and the King and Queen yielding to her urgent solicitations, granted her permission to depart with the magical assistance of Canzade, who began by depriving her of the power of creating verdure and flowers beneath her footsteps. I could wish, said she, to diminish your sensibility, but that is out of my power; my art can only be exercised over objects purely material. I could deprive you of your beauty....... Alas! said Zeneida, with a sigh, the charms of my person have indeed proved useless; but leave them to the ravages of time and affliction......Canzade smiled. You think, returned the Princess, that I still set some little value on my beauty, though the fancy of Omasis could not be fixed by it?.........I believe, replied Canzade, that you are as little attached

to it as a woman can be, but that is quite sufficient to inspire you with a wish to preserve it: besides, even though you had declared yourself willing to resign your beauty, I should never have consented to deprive you of it. I will now, continued Canzade, present you with two gifts which will enable you to travel without trouble or inconvenience: this rose, which will always preserve its bloom, will render you invisible whenever you place it on the left side of your bosom; and it will transport you in an instant to the country you wish to visit, though it should be at the most remote extremity of the globe, whenever you pluck off one of its leaves, which will that instant be renewed: even though you should lose this talisman you need be under no uneasiness, for it will lose its magical power in any hands but yours, and I will moreover enable you to impart the same virtues to the wild-rose of the fields, or any other flower: by breathing on the commonest plant you

shall produce this enchantment. I have, however, to inform you that you must always remain six months in the place to which the rose may transport you. Behold my second present, it is a quiver filled with arrows; when you wish to write to the Queen, your mother, you have only to fasten your letter to one of there arrows, shoot it into the air, and in less than ten minutes the arrow will fall at the feet of the Queen. Your quiver will never be exhausted, it will always contain the same number of arrows; and to enable the Queen to correspond with you, I will present her with a quiver of the same description.

The Princess delighted with these valuable presents, without loss of time made every necessary arrangement for her departure. She had frequently heard the most flattering descriptions of a republic situated on the island of Liberty, about three hundred leagues from her father's dominions; there she resolved to spend six months. The Queen immediately

dispatched a squire and a lady of the court, named Zerbina, who proceeded with the utmost expedition to the capital of the Island of Liberty. As soon as Zeneida heard of their arrival on this foreign island, she took leave of the King and Queen; she wrote a long letter to Azerolla, entreating that she would immediately wed the King of Cachemere; then having once more embraced the Queen with a countenance bathed in tears, she covered herself with a large veil, and plucking off one of the leaves of her rose found herself suddenly transported to the foot of a palm-tree, about two hundred paces from the gates of the city where she intended to sojourn. She then placed her rose on the left side of her bosom, and instantly became invisible: she entered the city, where she wandered up and down for about a quarter of an hour. At length she proceeded towards a little retired street which she perceived at some distance, having previously changed her rose from

the left to the right side. On entering the street she found a guide who conducted her to the residence of Zerbina and her squire.

Zeneida had imagined that the glory and enjoyments of self-love, if they could not afford her consolation, would at least serve to divert her. She assumed a fictitious name, and made choice of the profession of an artist, that she might be enabled the more promptly to display her talents. She spoke the language of the country in such perfection that no one could have supposed she was a foreigner; she even named her pretended native province in the republic. A woman is never at a loss to invent a romantic story; it may not be good, but it is always strung together with facility. The Princess, however, gave a charming history of her birth and education; she confided it to her hostess, by whom it was speedily circulated through the city, with the addition that the heroine was a lady of marvellous beauty. This ac-

count excited the liveliest curiosity, which Zeneida augmented by refusing to satisfy it; she received no visitors, and never went abroad without being closely veiled. At length she gave a concert (still covered with her veil), in which she sang and played on the har[illegible] The enthusiasm was universal; [illegible]vy, for once, was reduced to silence, [illegible]r to speak more correctly, was [illegible] [illegible]ed by amazement. The ladies, [illegible], contended that this admirable m[illegible] was not handsome, and that she must certainly have some strange deformity, since she took so [illegible] pains to conceal her person. In about a fortnight after this, Zeneida stated in the public papers her intention of making her *debut* at the principal theatre in the city, declaring, as she had done in announcing her concert, that she would perform only once, and that the profits were to be devoted to the relief of the poor. On the evening of her performance, the theatre, though immensely large, was insufficient to contain a fourth

part of those who were anxious to gain admittance. The Princess sustained the principal character in a highly pathetic tragedy; she had no need to circulate tickets nor to hire a party to applaud her. Whenever she appeared, the spectators were struck motionless with surprise and admiration: they had not power to applaud but they shed torrents of tears. At the commencement of the catastrophe, when the heroine was stabbed by her rival, the gentlemen uttered an involuntary exclamation of horror, and every lady in the theatre fainted. The generosity and sublime talents of Zeneida excited equal admiration; she became the universal subject of conversation: but enthusiasm was boundless when she consented to mix with society, and when it was known that this extraordinary person possessed as much wit as talent. She turned the heads of all the men, and made the women sicken with jealousy; she received thousands of declarations; every new fashion bore her

name; finally, she acquired a degree of celebrity which no individual had before enjoyed. She inspired so many violent passions, that she only escaped being forcibly carried off, by adopting the most extraordinary precautions, and above all by the happy power of becoming invisible. Zeneida, insensible to all the homage she received, soon found enemies in her rejected adorers; on the other hand, all the coquettes in the Republic formed a league against her. As it was impossible to depreciate her talent and beauty, they accused her of imposture; they asserted that her virtue was nothing but prudery, and her modesty mere hypocrisy; that her pride was excessive, and her ambition boundless: this revulsion was soon carried to the utmost extreme. Zeneida published an epic poem, the sublime beauty of which surpassed all the brilliant productions of the kind hitherto known. The whole edition was sold in a day; but all the poets and wits in the Republic became the irreconcile-

able enemies of the author. That a woman should rise so successfully to the dignity of the Epopee, was not to be endured! it was encroaching on the sovereignty of man. A feeble, dull poem, in the *descriptive style*, might possibly have been pardoned; but a masterpiece surpassing the productions of Homer could never be tolerated! The academicians formed themselves into a secret committee, in order to examine at leisure the poem which excited so much sensation. They found it to contain admirable versification, sublime invention, characters and sentiments full of grandeur, and the most perfect moral; yet they nevertheless published a severe criticism, in which they *proved* that this admirable work had acquired a false reputation, and that it was very inferior to many modern poems recently published. This severe judgment was not, indeed, supported by any quotations; but unjust criticism is, of all things, that which least requires solid arguments and

positive proofs. An author may please the public and be universally read; but whatever be the merit of his productions, he can never hope that the indulgence of his readers will defend him against the attacks of malice. The public is amused by malignity, even when its object and its injustice are sufficiently apparent; it seems gratified by the envy which its suffrage excites: this is, indeed, the only homage which certain writers are capable of rendering to public opinion.

The journalists of the Island of Liberty, through the dread of creating powerful enemies, joined the cabal which had been formed against Zeneida. Some of their contributors (though they were very few in number) seemed inclined to write according to the dictates of their conscience; the editors, however, would not permit them, and their essays remained in their port-folios. In giving an account of the work, the best disposed merely entered into general dis-

sertations on epic poems; others more courageous in injustice calumniated both the author and her work. Zeneida could not forbear refuting these falsehoods; she addressed remonstrances to the editors of the journals, who did not reject them; but the *overflow of matter* never afforded an opportunity for their insertion. These literary intrigues excited the surprise and indignation of the Princess; she had never witnessed anything of the sort in publishing works in her father's dominions. She was soon convinced that the *incognito* is by no means favourable to royal authors; she never could have imagined that the glory she sought, as the only consolation of hopeless love, would have been disputed with so much animosity. But this was not all; calumnies of a blacker nature were in preparation. The *indefinite liberty* of the press was established in the island; twenty slanderous libels were at once fulminated against Zeneida: twenty were not too many against

a woman capable of writing an admirable epic poem. Had she produced only a pleasing work of imagination in prose, her enemies might have shewn more moderation. In these publications it was roundly asserted that the author of the poem possessed neither genius nor talent, and her character and reputation were openly attacked. Some libellers asserted that Zeneida was not the author of the poem, and that she had obtained it surreptitiously; others declared that she had purchased it, and even mentioned the author's name, who was said to have died ten years before. Finally, these libels described Zeneida as a base courtezan, who had in another quarter of the Indies made a disgraceful traffic of her charms, and now came, under an assumed name, to usurp the homage she could obtain only by the vilest imposture. Even her youth and beauty were called in question. The public was informed that this *adventuress* (for thus she was designated) concealed her age, and that

she was thirty at the very least. Her enemies added that she painted both red and white, that she wore artificial teeth and false hair, that she had a frightful deformity in her shape, which was artfully concealed by a tunic contrived for that purpose. At length satirical couplets were circulated against her, in which all these falsehoods were repeated. The unfortunate Zeneida, though she still retained a few powerful friends, experienced so much private malice in society, that she withdrew from the great world and confined herself in absolute solitude: she would have returned to her father's states without delay; but by the charm attached to her rose she was obliged to reside for half a year at every place she visited, and she had yet only been four months on the Island of Liberty. When her numerous enemies learnt that she lived in profound retirement, they declared that they had banished her from society, and even accused her of secretly conspiring against

the government. Republics are always distrustful; Zeneida became *suspected*, and she received orders to quit the city within twenty-four hours, and to depart from the Republic. Being unable to obey this mandate, she rendered herself invisible. She devoted her time to examining the city and studying the laws and government of the Island of Liberty.—Though very different from those of the Happy Island, they nevertheless produced the same results, internal peace and public happiness; Zeneida, therefore, concluded that every government which is not despotic is good, if the laws be respected and the people moral.

Zeneida, disgusted with the glory so difficult to be obtained, when those who seek it do not happen to stand in the foremost rank, anxiously awaited the moment when she might quit the Island of Liberty. With the aid of her enchanted arrows she daily received communications from the Happy Island; she learnt that the King of Cachemere had manifested

the utmost regret at her departure; that Azerolla still resided at the court; that Omasis spent the greater part of his time in her society; but that he had not hitherto madeany formal promise to marry her; that finally his delays and changeable fancies sufficiently proved his indecision. Alas! said Zeneida, he loves Azerolla; he is united to her by the sincerest attachment, whilst he regrets me only through vanity! how wretched is my fate!......Why can he not forget me since I am an obstacle to his happiness!

These melancholy reflections were, however, succeeded by the most joyful emotions. The day had at length arrived when Zeneida could return to her native country, after a tedious absence of six months, and she received a letter from the Queen, informing her that some misunderstanding had arisen between Omasis and Azerolla, and that the former had returned to his own dominions.

Zeneida instantly plucked off one of the petals of her rose, and in a few mo-

ments found herself in the arms of her parents; she was, however, invisible to the rest of the court. She had formed a plan which her parents approved of, for it was impossible to refuse any thing to her persuasive eloquence. The Princess obtained a new favour from Canzade; she retained her enchanted rose, and requested that the fairy would enable her to assume for the space of six months, the countenance, figure, and voice of Azerolla. Canzade with a single touch of her wand performed this metamorphosis. She, moreover, promised by a secret charm to detain Azerolla at the court of the Happy Island, and to prevent all her letters, and even those in which she might be mentioned, from reaching Omasis. Zeneida, having once more bade adieu to her parents, was transported to the kingdom of Cachemere; and having caused herself to be announced by the name of Azerolla, she was immediately admitted to the King's cabinet. She found Omasis alone, and

overwhelmed with melancholy. Imagining that he beheld Azerolla, he testified more surprise than pleasure at so unexpected a visit: he represented, with some degree of severity, the injury her reputation might sustain in consequence of so extraordinary a proceeding; and after all, continued he, what do you seek? an unfortunate Prince who has only a divided heart to offer you, and who is no longer master of himself!...... Omasis, replied Zeneida, I come not to reclaim the rights of an unfortunate passion, the hopes of which you yourself encouraged, but I come to offer you the consolations of friendship: I see you in affliction and am ready to sacrifice my life to serve you; for I have now positively renounced all idea of marriage. Look upon me as a generous friend, who, after having maturely reflected on your situation, comes to offer you useful advice. Attend to me and you may still be happy. When I have restored your peace of mind I will quit you and

retire to some distant country to end my days in solitude; but my situation will not then be wretched, by restoring your happiness I shall for ever ensure my own.

This language surprised Omasis. Azerolla was always amiable and sensible, but she had never before manifested such pure and disinterested sentiments, and even on the day of their separation she had overwhelmed him with reproaches. He gazed on Zeneida with tenderness: can you be sincere, said he, you whose anger embittered our last adieus; you who vowed *eternal hatred* to me!...... I wished indeed, replied the Princess, to banish you from my affections; but how much more easy would it have been to cease to love myself!......Azerolla! exclaimed the Prince,......Ah! had you spoken to me thus, had you uttered this subduing language, I never should have had courage to forsake you!......Promise, said Zeneida, to grant me every morning an hour's conversation. I shall not see

you again for a week, during which time I shall prepare, not my discourses, which will always be devoid of art, but the means of consolation I intend to offer you. Adieu, dear Omasis, think no more on the Azerolla whom you left on the Happy Island; instead of an angry mistress, eager to resume her ascendancy or to satisfy her revenge, she is a friend who aspires only to the glory of becoming reconciled to you, and of restoring you to tranquillity. With these words, Zeneida, without waiting for a reply, quitted the cabinet, leaving Omasis filled with astonishment.

Zeneida had every reason to be satisfied with this first interview; she was no longer anxious to amaze and subdue Omasis, she wished to gain his affections; she had leaŕnt not to trust to the capricious power of imagination, and the uncertain and fragile empire of vanity; she now aspired to reign over a sensible heart, in every way corresponding with her own.

A suite of magnificent apartments were prepared for Zeneida in the palace. On the following day Omasis signified his wish to see her, but Zeneida avoided his visit, by declaring that she persisted in her determination not to receive him until the expiration of a week. Zeneida, by her power of becoming invisible, daily quitted the palace with the first rays of the sun; she examined every part of the city and its environs, visited cottages and hospitals, and entered unperceived the courts of law and ministerial cabinets: she listened attentively to all she heard, carefully examined every thing she saw, and collected the most valuable notes and observations.

When the week was at an end, Omasis hastened to the apartments of Zeneida. She was in readiness to receive him. The King found her seated at a table, with a portfolio before her. Sir, said she, presenting to him several sheets of paper, here is the consolation I promised

you; these papers will convince you that you have acts of injustice to repair, and that there exist within your dominions victims of oppression without defence, and useful talents without reward or encouragement. You cannot surely be unhappy whilst you possess the means of doing good. How! exclaimed Omasis, can it be possible that you have made all these enquiries! Oh! continue to trace out my duties: they will be the more dear to me, and I shall fulfil them the more faithfully if you condescend to be my guide! I never knew your excellence till now!......Well, returned Zeneida, promise to walk out with me *incognito* for an hour or two every evening, and I will point out to you facts which will be far more convincing than any report I can make. The King joyfully accepted this proposal, and Zeneida conducted him to the obscure abodes of men of learning and philosophers. Some of these individuals had written excellent works, which were afterwards con-

signed to oblivion, because men of the world and courtiers were incapable of appreciating their merit, or because the ministers of state had other *protégés*, who were the rivals and detractors of these unfortunate authors; others had made important discoveries, but they were ignorant of the art of intrigue, and were therefore styled *projectors*, an epithet which is a death-blow to the unpatronized man of genius. Yet is not every inventor a *projector?* Zeneida did not forget to conduct Omasis to the cottages she had visited; there the heart of the Prince was for the first time penetrated by the innocent and touching voice of nature, which is never heard in courts. Zeneida discoursed with the peasantry concerning the government, the ministers, and the king. Omasis found that he was beloved, though his policy was occasionally censured. The burthensome nature of certain taxes likewise excited complaint. The reign and person of the King were appreciated

without either flattery or reproach. Omasis thought he heard the voice of posterity; he was not mistaken, for the judgments it pronounces on sovereigns are always previously formed beneath the humble roof of the cultivator and the artizan.

Omasis profited by these visits; he reformed abuses, and moderated the taxes by which his subjects were oppressed; he drew talent from obscurity, and thus excited the utmost uneasiness in his ministers, who soon found that the King was determined to act according to his own ideas of justice. Omasis became daily more and more attached to her, who prompted him to the performance of so many virtuous actions. He admired the gentleness and equality of her temper, and the angelic perfection of her mind. One day, having accidentally discovered some act of singular generosity which Zeneida had secretly performed, he hastened to find her; for we are always doubly anxious to see those we

love, when we have to congratulate them on a good action, or to make them acquainted with one. Omasis found Zeneida alone in her apartment; he spoke to her with tenderness respecting what he had heard. How, said he, could you hitherto conceal from me so many amiable qualities? How different you appeared in the Happy Island to what you really are! I thought you frivolous and conceited; but you live only to do good, and to inspire virtuous sentiments in others.

Judge then, said the Princess with a smile, whether I am selfish, since the sole object of my journey is to reconcile you to Zeneida...... How! interrupted Omasis.—Yes, sir, I assure you that Princess is better calculated to become your wife than you imagine......Azerolla, you cannot be serious......—I protest that I am declaring the sincerest and most fervent wish of my heart...... Then you are resolved that we shall part for ever?......No, on the contrary, I

wish to bring about this union because I love you......—Your generosity misleads you, dear Azerolla. Believe me, I have seriously reflected on this subject; the extreme superiority of Zeneida's genius would be an insurmountable obstacle to our happiness; it is too mortifying always to play a subaltern part in the eyes of those we love best, to be eternally inferior in all things, and without the possibility of deceiving one's-self on this point.—*Inferior in all things!* how, sir! can you not equal her in virtue? Does not true superiority depend on the mind? Your's, I am sure, is as noble and as susceptible as Zeneida's......I even flatter myself, replied Omasis, that I possess more sensibility than Zeneida; as you one day justly observed, glory is the sole object of her wishes; the perfection of her talents, and the universal admiration they excite, will prove her consolation under every misfortune.—And if, after all, you should be condemning her unjustly: if she still should love you,

Omasis!—Ah! Azerolla, you must not judge of her heart by your own!......Did she not voluntarily forsake me? I, in a fit of despair, parted with you in consequence of a foolish quarrel, and you now come to console me and restore me to myself......Think you Zeneida could love me thus? and do you imagine I can hesitate now? During the three months that you have resided here, I have carefully consulted my heart....You have at length fixed my wandering affections.—But Zeneida, interrupted the Princess...—Ah, do not speak of her; there is in her name, as well as her person, some magical charm which always perplexes me. I will make no engagements which I cannot fulfil. I will not promise to forget Zeneida; but I cannot regret her if you consent to unite your fate to mine.—Poor Princess! Ah, it is plain you never loved her!—Loved her! no, replied Omasis, I could never hope for any real return; I merely entertained a transient passion for her. Women in general va-

lue enthusiasm above all things, and they exert every effort to inspire it: like all slaves to vanity and ambition, they sacrifice the future to the present moment. Yet the most lasting and delightful empire is that which is formed by confidence and fortified by habit. Your understanding charms, but does not intimidate me; when I suffer myself to be guided by your counsel, I never feel that I am subdued by a power superior to my own; on the contrary, you merely rouse my natural inclinations, and seem to know me better than I know myself. How, sir! replied the Princess, with a dejected air, do you then confess that you never loved Zeneida!......And if she loved you passionately; if she should come to reclaim the rights which you yourself gave...—What a chimerical supposition! Zeneida can never love...... Ah! had she loved me, she would have raised me to a level with herself; I should have admired her without feeling, or, at least, without being mortified by

her superiority. The glory of having won a heart such as her's, would have compensated for all that talent and genius are capable of procuring. Her love would have made me a privileged being: it would have rendered me her equal. But she entertained for me only a slight sentiment of preference. Her jealousy was excited only by her wounded pride; she renounced me, even without an explanation, and abandoned me to depart in search of new conquests, and she now never bestows a thought on me....—Are you quite sure of that? enquired the Princess.—Oh yes! let us speak no more of her: your generosity on this point gives me pain; I love you alone, and am resolved to devote my life to you. Say, charming Azerolla, do you consent to make me happy?—In three months hence I will give you an answer. Omasis protested against so long a delay, but Zeneida was inexorable, and he was under the necessity of yielding.

Meanwhile the vindictive Altemine,

who had perfidiously endowed Zeneida with so many perfections, still kept a watchful eye on the young Princess; she was more inveterate than ever against the Queen of the Happy Island, in consequence of her reconciliation with Canzade; she detested Omasis, who had been educated under the guidance of that benevolent fairy, and learnt with indescribable satisfaction, that a misunderstanding had arisen between him and Zeneida. Her art enabled her to ascertain all that was passing, and she found, to her extreme mortification, that the Princess, by a happy stratagem, had won the heart which her charms could not subdue, and that Omasis was too deeply in love to be henceforward humbled by her superiority. How was it possible to divide two hearts so closely united together? Falsehood and calumny could not produce their ordinary effect on two penetrating minds filled with reciprocal esteem. Altemine, who was always cautious of her reputation, never resorted to

violent means of executing her vengeance; she neither carried off her victims by force, nor employed cruel persecutions. She was however resolved to devise some means of separating the two lovers, before the term of Zeneida's metamorphosis should expire; for she well knew that gratitude, admiration, and love, would for ever rivet the heart of Omaris, when he should recognize the beautiful Princess of the Happy Island in the pretended Azerolla, and marriage would doubtless be the result of his gratitude. How was this happy event to be obviated? Nothing is so inventive as malice, and without the help of magic many a haughty and vindictive woman has proved the truth of this observation. After long and serious reflection, Altemine formed a plan, the success of which appeared certain, and she accordingly resolved not to delay its execution. She possessed the most precious of talismans; namely, a brilliant ruby, which by becoming suddenly dim and black, disco-

vered in the most certain way any deceit and artifice in the conversation and conduct of the individuals who were put to the test: it was merely necessary that the possessor of the talisman should wish for such a disclosure. The talisman afforded no details, it furnished no information respecting the species of dissimulation; the sudden change of its brilliancy and colour merely indicated that deceit was practised. To this jewel Altemine added an additional charm, by which its virtue would in future be suspended for the space of twelve hours, whenever it might be transferred to a new owner. Altemine, for the mere satisfaction of her revenge, resolved to sacrifice this admirable talisman; but in conformity with the system from which she never deviated, she contrived to impart to this action the semblance of exalted generosity.

Altemine, having determined on the stratagem by which she intended to transfer her talisman to the hands of

Omasis, immediately rendered herself invisible in order to watch his proceedings. The Prince one day rode out on a hunting party, and Altemine, by her enchantments, separated him from his suite, and occasioned him to lose his way amidst the windings of an immense forest. Omasis made useless endeavours to rejoin his party, and when night set in he found himself in a long avenue of palm-trees, at the extremity of which he perceived a brilliant light. Astonished at this phenomenon, he spurred his horse, and by the lustre of a brilliant ruby, he perceived at a short distance a beautiful female, attired in white, and bound to a tree by a massy chain of diamonds and opals: it was Altemine whom the Prince had never seen before that moment; she wore on her arm the talisman which she intended to present to Omasis, the wonderful ruby which shed its dazzling rays on every side. At this sight the Prince stood motionless with suprise. Stranger, said Altemine, you see before you an

unfortunate fairy, confined in this desert by an evil-genius, and who cannot be liberated except on conditions which it is almost impossible to fulfil.......What are these conditions? inquired Omasis. —My deliverer, replied the fairy, must be a just, merciful, and generous King. —I, said Omasis, reign over a people whom I love, I am always ready to pardon, and have never yet committed a voluntary act of injustice.—These are virtues which few sovereigns can boast of, said Altemine, but they are still insufficient. What is the object of your ambition?—To render my subjects happy.—What are your ideas of glory?—I am of opinion, that there can be no real glory without integrity, humanity, justice, and virtue.—Heaven be praised! exclaimed the fairy, I have found the hero who must break the cruel enchantment! Advance Prince, this terrible chain will fall to dust beneath your generous hands.......At these words Omasis alighted from his horse, advanced to-

wards Altemine, and no sooner touched the chain than it was in reality reduced to powder. Altemine manifested transports of joy and gratitude. She took the precious ruby from her arm, and having explained its miraculous virtue: Prince, pursued she, you indeed deserve never to be the victim of dissimulation, and by sacrificing this talisman I am too happy in being able to offer you a testimony of my gratitude. But hear the conditions on which you obtain it; you must merit this sacrifice by the utmost discretion and firmness of mind. As soon as we are convinced that an individual deceives us, we should withdraw from him our confidence and friendship. ......Most certainly, replied Omasis; nothing can excuse hypocrisy, and the more we love, the more we are shocked on detecting it.—For this reason, I require that you should for ever banish from your presence, all who cannot stand the test of this precious ruby. Give me your promise to do this in-

stantly and without explanation?—I swear to do so, replied the Prince.—I need not enjoin you to observe discretion, for you must be aware that this talisman would lose its chief utility were it known to be in your possession. With these words, the fairy presented the ruby to the King, who dropt on his knee to receive it; he placed it in his bosom, promising to keep it for ever concealed; and whilst he expressed his gratitude: Prince, said Altemine, I have indeed presented you with the most valuable gift that a sovereign can possibly possess, but the numerous discoveries it has enabled me to make, leave me in possession of a talisman almost as useful as yours.—What is it? inquired Omasis.—Distrust.—Alas! that is mortifying, for even distrust may occasionally deceive.—I am of a different opinion, replied Altemine; finally, continued she with a smile, my talisman will enable you to govern justly, though it may not afford you pleasure. To become thoroughly acquainted with

mankind is a species of knowledge which cannot ensure felicity! Omasis opposed these misanthropic sentiments, but without success; Altemine knew only the imperfections of the human heart, she had never loved, and had consequently tried the power of her talisman only on her rivals and enemies. Before she took leave of the King, she informed him that the ruby would mark the various shades of hypocrisy by becoming more or less dim, and that it would only appear totally black when deceit was carried to the utmost extent. Then pointing to a road on the right of the forest, where she informed him he would find his attendants, she instantly disappeared; the Prince mounted his horse, and galloping off according to the directions of the fairy, he in a few minutes joined his hunting companions.

Omasis was overjoyed at possessing a talisman, which he of course regarded as an inestimable treasure. Still, however, certain vague and confused reflec-

tions produced in his mind a feeling of dissatisfaction. It was late when he returned to the palace, and he accordingly retired to rest; yet notwithstanding the fatigue of the day, he enjoyed but little sleep: the superb ruby, which lay concealed in his bosom, seemed every hour to grow more and more heavy, till at length it became an oppressive weight upon his heart! How many dear and agreeable illusions was it destined to banish! And if, in reality, candour and sincerity were no where to be found, how painful it was to be convinced of so melancholy a truth! Omasis dreaded the total change of the talisman far less than its partial dimness, for how could he ever persuade himself that those he esteemed were capable of dissimulation; and could the talisman be tried on any one without experiencing some diminution of its lustre? Was love, or even friendship, entirely exempt from artifice, or at least from some degree of exaggeration? Omasis was convinced that the discovery of the slightest

deception employed by a beloved object, would overwhelm him with affliction; he therefore resolved to commence his experiments on those individuals for whom he entertained least regard. On the following day he sent for one of his ministers who had long been an object of universal dislike. The principles and manners of this man were of the most austere description. He firmly believed that the surest way to please his master, was by rigidly fulfilling his duty: the courtiers all accused him of dissimulation and hypocrisy. Omasis determined that this minister should be the first on whom he would try the virtue of his talisman; and to his utter astonishment the ruby retained all its brilliancy. Omasis was then convinced that a sovereign ought not to judge of men by words instead of proofs. It is not certain whether during the remainder of his life he continued to act according to this rule; *to learn* is an important object, but *to profit* by what one knows is

a task infinitely more useful and difficult, particularly to princes. The King, with his talisman closely concealed in the palm of his hand, proceeded to his council, where he found assembled all the most distinguished statesmen of the kingdom of Cachemere: not one could stand the test of the magical ruby: and it occasionally became so very black, that when the King found an opportunity of stealing a glance at it, he could scarcely persuade himself that it had not been transformed into a piece of coal......On quitting the council, the Prince exiled two ministers, and dismissed five or six individuals, to whom he had previously shewn the utmost favour. If he entered his council vexed and dissatisfied, he left it filled with misanthropy, and in a sovereign this is the worst of all feelings. He on whose disposition public happiness depends, should regard every thing in the most favourable point of view, and it were to be wished that his heart should never be entirely divested of agreeable illusions.

During the whole of the day, Omasis never once beheld the pretended Azerolla; indeed he dreaded to see her. The perfect confidence with which she had inspired him was now, in spite of himself, somewhat shaken. The many mortifying discoveries he had made, by the aid of the talisman, laid his agitated heart open to a thousand suspicions; this distrust was in a few hours confirmed and augmented. The ladies of the court, who assembled to spend the evening at the palace, remarked that the Prince had lost his usual gallantry and grace; whilst he conversed with them, he was constantly watching for an opportunity to cast a glance on his dangerous ruby, which during the whole of the night continued invariably as black as ink. He retired, full of indignation and anger against the courtiers, male and female, whom he left confounded by his ill-humour, and overwhelmed with consternation.

Altemine, in presenting the talisman

to the King, had artfully calculated the consequences which this dangerous gift must inevitably produce: she well knew that with a mind inventive and fertile in ingenious expedients, Zeneida possessed a candid and sincere heart. The stratagem she had employed was not merely innocent, but was an affecting proof of unalterable and pure attachment. Nevertheless, all was in reality false: her person, the tones of her voice, and even her language, since she always spoke in the name of Azerolla. The enchanted ruby could not, therefore, be applied to her, without indicating the most extraordinary deceit and inconceivable and unheard-of artifice. Omasis had sworn to enter into no explanation, and for ever to banish from his presence all whose dissimulation should dim the lustre of his talisman; but his own indignation would have been sufficient to prompt him to this determination. Altemine's plan was therefore well contrived; but the wicked can only acquire an imperfect knowledge of the hu-

man heart: they are ignorant of its noblest qualities, and are only capable of burlesquing it; delicacy and sensibility are lights which totally fail them. The fairy had never imagined that Omasis would scruple to try the effects which the character of the pretended Azerolla might produce on his enchanted ruby. From the first moment he had, however, firmly resolved not to make this fatal trial on one who had inspired him with perfect esteem, and to whom he had a thousand times promised the most unreserved confidence. Yet without departing from this determination, he found, whenever he reflected on the subject (and few moments escaped in which he did not reflect on it), that what at first appeared a matter of indifference, was after all a real sacrifice to himself, and an extravagant feeling of delicacy towards the object of his esteem. Nevertheless, he determined not to put her to the trial, nor even to acquaint her with the existence of the talisman, until the day on

which she should become his bride, when he proposed presenting her with the inestimable ruby. But this happy event could not take place until the expiration of two months, and these two months seemed the most tedious of his whole life.

Zeneida observed with astonishment the striking alteration which had taken place in the King's temper; she was likewise convinced that he concealed from her some important secret; but she never questioned him on the subject and was resolved to wait with patience till time should unravel the mystery. Yet every succeeding day appeared more and more wearisome. Omasis was still benevolent and sensible, but she sought in vain for the cause of his taciturnity, and the apparent caprice which was observable in all he did or said. The Prince, whose kind and indulgent disposition had hitherto been so unchangeable, now banished from his presence the very individuals whom he had formerly hono-

red with his favor. Each succeeding morning announced some new disgrace; the court was entirely new modelled, and the new courtiers were treated no better than their predecessors. These continual changes gave rise to others, of a more distressing nature, in public affairs; all proceeded badly, and universal dissatisfaction was the result. Zeneida profoundly afflicted, at length ventured with the utmost gentleness to question the King respecting his extraordinary rigour. Omasis replied, that he was merely inflicting the punishment due to falsehood, hypocrisy and duplicity. Alas! said Zeneida, few men, particularly in courts, are exempt from dissimulation; but that is of little importance, if they possess the talent requisite for discharging the duties entrusted to them; remember, Prince, you should judge of men in place by their conduct, and not by their characters. It is in vain, resumed Omasis, I never can bring myself to regard dissimulation with

an indulgent eye. But it is dangerous, said Zeneida, to devote all our efforts to detect it, for in that case it will become so frequently visible, that we may be apt to suspect it where it really does not exist. Ah! exclaimed Omasis, with a profound sigh, unfortunately I can no longer confine myself to mere suspicion! Omasis, who was gloomy and solitary within the walls of his palace, found no consolation but in assuming disguise, in order to search for truth in the most obscure classes of society; the fatal ruby was seldom dimmed, and never became totally black beneath the humble roof of the cottager. During these secret excursions the King met with a farmer better informed than the rest, and with whose sincerity he was charmed; he resolved to appoint him to some important post, and the court beheld with astonishment an obscure countryman suddenly raised to the highest dignities in the state: this man, in spite of his honesty, soon committed irreparable errors through

mere ignorance, and he was sent off in disgrace like the rest, because the talisman informed the King that he had already lost half his sincerity.

At length the wished-for day arrived when Zeneida was to resume her real character. A short time before the hour of her metamorphosis, she proceeded to the cabinet of Omasis, and informed him that she accepted the offer of his hand. Omasis immediately presented her with the ruby, and in a few words related its wonderful history; he at the same time assured her that she was the only individual of the court whom he had not put to the trial. At these words Zeneida smiled. You will, she said, enjoy the reward of such refined delicacy! at length, pursued she, all is explained: I now understand why so many individuals have been disgraced within the last two months, and what rendered you so peevish and melancholy. Alas! yes, and this melancholy will never more forsake me; I entertained too good an opi-

nion of human nature.—And do you really imagine that your ruby has made you acquainted with the whole of *human nature?*—Are not those we love all the world to us? replied the King.—And have you any reason to complain of those you love? This question charmed Omasis; he was somewhat dissatisfied to find that Zeneida accepted the ruby at the very first offer, without declaring her willingness to submit to its decision; but this last question announced a degree of confidence which fortified his own.

Zeneida, who read all that was passing in his mind, smiled and said, before I accept this dangerous talisman I must request that you will try the effects which my character may produce on it....... Oh! no, I can never be prevailed on to do that, said Omasis. And why not? inquired Zeneida cheerfully, this looks something like hypocrisy on your part, Omasis, for I am sure you heartily wish to do so.......Besides, since you have

made me acquainted with the virtues of this talisman, can I, with propriety, refuse to be tried by it? Come, come, I entreat, nay, I desire, Omasis......— Then I must certainly obey, said the King, joyfully: with these words he took the jewel in his hand, and proceeding to try the experiment, anxiously cast his eyes upon it.' What was his emotion on finding the talisman blacker than it had ever before appeared?......He stood motionless and petrified. Zeneida burst into a fit of laughter. Well, Prince, said she, wherefore, this amazement? Is a dissembling woman so surprising a phenomenon? Perfidious Azerolla! exclaimed Omasis, can you combine so much effrontery with your falsehood!......How sincerely I esteemed you! Alas! why did you not suffer me to cherish the happy error?...—Omasis, said Zeneida, be advised by me. Throw this odious ruby into the sea, and then relate to me your adventure. You did well to forbear making this insulting experiment for the

space of two months; but you were unable to maintain your generosity to the last, and it is but just that you should be punished for a few moments.......—Alas! I shall suffer during the remainder of my life.—No, Omasis, that you shall not, for I can never forget that you possessed sufficient greatness of mind to forbear putting me to the test without my knowledge or consent.......And what signifies the opinion of a wretch like you?......It is true, continued the Princess, that for the last six months I have deceived you in every thing, except the advice I gave you, but......Oh! spare this hated conversation, leave me, quit my presence, you have rendered me the most unhappy of men.......With these words, Omasis, in a paroxysm of grief and anger, threw himself on a sofa, whilst he shed a deluge of tears.......He closed his eyes to avoid the sight of her whom he wished henceforth to detest. Omasis, said Zeneida, dear Omasis, there is a supernatural light even superior to the power of

magic, and perfect confidence in those we love is capable of producing it. In spite of the evidence which condemns me, and which appears so unquestionable, look on me once again, and you will perhaps retract your opinion...... At these words Omasis trembled; he raised his eyes and fixed them on Zeneïda. He beheld on her countenance the most unequivocal expressions of confidence, joy, and tenderness: he instantly recollected a thousand proofs of pure and generous love which he had received from her, and his heart panted with hope; but, said he, in a faltering voice, by your own confession you have for the last six months deceived me *in every thing!*—I do confess I have; but is all deception criminal, Omasis?—Ah! exclaimed the Prince, it is in vain; in spite of my reason I cannot think you guilty.—Then, returned Zeneida, you shall receive the reward of this generosity......Promise that in two minutes hence you will again make trial of your

talisman.—I will, he replied.—Well, then, Omasis, know that I have deceived you by an innocent stratagem Canzade, at my solicitation, enabled me to assume the form and features of another. Azerolla is married, and never in her life visited the kingdom of Cachemere......Just Heaven! exclaimed Omasis, throwing himself at the feet of the Princess, you are Zeneida!......—Your heart has at length unravelled the mystery, she replied.—Ah! I am too happy in being solely blameable.

Whilst the King of Cachemere, transported with joy, admiration, and love, pronounced these last words, the incomparable Princess of the Happy Island resumed her real form, and again appeared in all her dazzling beauty. Now, Omasis, said she, tell me whether I am sincere when I declare that I have never ceased to love you passionately, and that your happiness is a thousand times dearer to me than my own......Consult your talisman. No, no, replied the King, no,

Zeneida, I wish to gaze on no object but you. But you gave me your promise, Omasis? Besides, you will not, I am sure, deny me the pleasure of restoring the talisman to its original brilliancy...... At these words, Omasis cast his eyes on the ruby, which instantly shed forth such dazzling rays of light, that the whole apartment seemed to be suddenly illuminated. Oh enchanting lustre! exclaimed the happy Omasis! Oh celestial light, purer than the rays of the sun! It is Zeneida's virtue that creates thee! ......Thou shalt be my guide in the path of virtue, that henceforth I may never deviate from it!......Yes, Zeneida, I for ever renounce this detested talisman, since, for a few moments, it led me to doubt the excellence of your heart. It shall in future lie buried beneath the waves of the ocean. As the King uttered these words, the folding-doors of the apartment flew open, and the fairy Canzade appeared, followed by the King and Queen of the Happy

Island. Zeneida ran to embrace her parents, and Omasis at the same moment received the confirmation of his happiness. The day for the celebration of the nuptials was fixed on; splendid fetes, and what is still better, benevolent actions, taxes repealed, and charitable donations distributed among the poor, proclaimed the happy event to the people. Omasis, faithful to his promise, determined to cast his enchanted ruby into the sea; but Zeneida prevented him: Canzade, said she, has promised to modify its virtue; instead of vaguely indicating deceit and falsehood, it will henceforth be the means of confounding calumny and justifying innocence. You can in future only employ it as a test for the charges of accusers and the complaints of the oppressed who may appeal to your justice and protection. In other respects this ruby will possess no magical power, but will merely be a jewel of the ordinary kind. Remember, Prince, that friendship, solidly esta-

blished, requires boundless confidence; like love, it has its illusions which cannot be banished without divesting it of all its delicacy and charms. Finally, to a Prince who loves virtue, the most estimable of all talismans is to hate, despise, and repel flattery.

Omasis was so struck by the truth of these observations, that he immediately recalled several individuals whom he had banished from his court; he was convinced that a Prince who is anxious to promote the welfare of his subjects, should keep a watchful eye over men in place, whom he may happen to distrust, instead of disgracing them. Vigilance is always preferable to severity.

Omasis, by his union with Zeneida, became the best of Kings and the happiest of husbands. Zeneida ensured his felicity and constantly preserved his love, not by the superiority of her understanding and talent, but by the elevation and beauty of her mind and the excellence of her disposition.

THE

REEDS OF THE TIBER.

The man that hath no Music in himself,
And is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils:
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus:
Let no such man be trusted!

SHAKESPEARE. *Merchant of Venice.*

THE

REEDS OF THE TIBER.*



At that fatal period when the French, who were friends to religion, humanity, laws and monarchy, experienced generous hospitality every where but in their native country, the Marchioness de * * * travelled to Italy: she had resided about three weeks at Rome, when one day, in company with an Italian lady of her acquaintance, she visited a nunnery for the purpose of seeing some beautiful pictures which adorned the church of the convent. Having examined every thing worthy of attention in the interior of the

* The harmonious effects described in this story are not the mere invention of fancy; they are well known to all who have resided for any length of time at Rome.

church, she expressed a wish to descend into a vault, the door of which stood open: here a sad and interesting object made a deep impression on her mind. She beheld an open coffin surrounded by lighted tapers, in which lay the body of a young nun, in the dress of her order, and with her face uncovered: she had breathed her last on the preceding evening, and her remains had just been deposited in the vault. A rosary of coral was extended from her clasped hands, which were whiter than the purest alabaster: a dry reed lay within the coffin by her side; her countenance, far from being distorted, presented a set of graceful and regular features. Whilst the Marchioness, deeply affected, stood gazing on this figure, the beauty of which seemed to triumph over death itself, Olympia (for such was the name of the lady who accompanied her) addressed her as follows: this unfortunate young woman will interest you still more when I inform you that she was a native of

France, and that the most unfortunate love proved the occasion of her death. ......Her lover has, doubtless, been one of the victims of the Revolution?—No, he died at Rome......However, I shall relate the story but indifferently; come to my house this evening, you shall hear all the particulars from Belozi, with whom you are acquainted, and who had them from Lorenzi, the friend of these ill-fated lovers. The Marchioness gladly accepted the invitation, and in the evening, Belozi, seated between her and Olympia, gave the following recital:

The unhappy hero of this history, himself noted down the most singular events of his life. He was the intimate friend of Lorenzi, to whom he presented the manuscript which I have read; when therefore I introduce him as speaking, I shall be certain of really expressing his own ideas, his sorrows and his sentiments.

This young man was a native of Paris; his name was Rozeval: his father

was a celebrated musician, and as he wished to qualify his son to follow the profession which might be best suited to his taste, he gave him an excellent education. Rozeval possessed genius, application, and a passion for the arts and for reading: he learned several languages, and richly stored his memory; he at the same time cultivated poetry, drawing, and music, and, in addition to all these acquirements, he played the flute in exquisite style at the age of seventeen. Love, at length, determined his profession. He had a cousin named Urania, about two years younger than himself, who had been an orphan from her infancy; she was under the guardianship of an organist, whose instruction had enabled her to perform with proficiency on the piano: Urania likewise practised the harp, for she was passionately fond of music, which she intended to study as her profession. She was already competent occasionally to supply her tutor's place at the organ; and often in the or-

gan-loft of the church of St. Paul did she delight the congregation with the harmonious sounds of her harp, accompanied by her cousin's flute.

In this church, whilst offering to religion the first fruits of their talents, and celebrating the greatness and goodness of the Almighty, the love of Urania and Rozeval first had birth—that love which afterwards proved so constant and so pure. No profane or frivolous idea was blended with these first impressions; their very feelings were sanctified as well as their sentiments; they beheld within the sacred walls of the church only the august image of religious awe and faith: it was not the voluptuous odour of precious essences and amber which charmed their senses, but the mystic perfume which burned upon the altar. They heard only the solemn tolling of bells and the strains of pious hymns, which expressed supreme adoration and gratitude: whilst their souls ascended towards heaven they seemed to unite and blend together in

order to lay at the foot of the eternal throne the same tribute of veneration, the same wishes and the same hopes.

The organist and the father of Rozeval quickly perceived the mutual attachment of the young musicians, and they encouraged it. It was determined that Rozeval should receive the hand of Urania as soon as her course of musical education should be completed. Diligence now became a proof of love, and study a passion. Urania seldom quitted her piano-forte or her harp, and her cousin was almost constantly seated by her side. Instead of passing away the hours as formerly in agreeable conversation, Urania entertained him with music as long as his visits lasted. The heart of Rozeval sufficiently understood this harmonious language, to which he replied by the enchanting sounds of his flute. They both played with a degree of feeling and taste which was admired as the surprising progress of art, whilst it was due only to love. Among the various compositions

which they daily practised together was one in particular which they were never weary of repeating; it was a sonatá for the harpsichord, so greatly admired in Italy that it is there only known by the title of *Corelli's beautiful sonata.* It may in truth be regarded as one of the most charming productions of that celebrated composer. Every evening, before they parted, the young lovers played together this exquisite composition, every note of which remained engraven on their minds till the succeeding day.

But disastrous events suddenly arose to disturb these tranquil and innocent enjoyments. The French revolution broke out! Rozeval was in his nineteenth year, and Urania was just sixteen. Some time previous to this period, Rozeval's father had occasion to pass the autumn in London, and, notwithstanding the reluctance of his son, he found it necessary to depart with him in the month of August. Rozeval, far from foreseeing all the sorrows that awaited him, cal-

culated with certainty on returning to France at the commencement of the winter: nevertheless, his grief was excessive; he was separated from Urania for the first time in his life. His father was so successful in the business which had induced him to visit England, that contrary to his original intention he continued there for the space of eight months: at the expiration of this period he was, however seized with a severe fit of illness, and Rozeval found it impossible to return to France. Being a musician, he was not placed on the list of emigrants; but he was nevertheless under the necessity of remaining in London to watch over the health of his father, who, for upwards of a year, continued to struggle without hope of recovery. Death at length released him from his suffering, and Rozeval having paid the last sad duties to his parent, hastily quitted England and returned to France. He found his Urania more fondly attached to him than ever, and adorned

with all the charms of superior talent and a fascinating person. They again played with delight, not only *Corelli's sonata*, but all the pieces which they had been accustomed to practice together before their separation: they were thus repeating the conversations of early love.

It was determined that the sacred bond of Hymen should for ever unite the lovers as soon as Rozeval should be out of mourning. The dreadful reign of terror had now commenced. The splendid mansions of the great were already converted into public taverns, and churches into stables. Priests either fled or received the palm of martyrdom. Infuriated tyrants tore the veils of chastity from the virgins devoted to Heaven, and in spite of their terror and resistance, violently forced them from their sacred retreats. This was termed in the republican language of the day, restoring them to liberty.......

One day the organist, on his return home, alarmed Urania by his paleness

and agitation. He threw himself into a chair, and in a faltering voice, exclaimed, "Oh the barbarians! Oh the cannibals!" "Heavens! cried Urania, what has happened? What new horror have you witnessed?"—"Alas, Urania, the most inconceivable of horrors! Oh the monsters!" —"For mercy's sake explain yourself! My very blood runs cold with apprehension!" —"Oh Urania! I have seen—I tremble when I think of it,—I have just seen the pipes of St. Paul's organ sold to a crowd of pewterers and tinkers!" These words in some measure relieved Urania; for the most fatal ideas had a moment before crowded on her imagination: but she discreetly concealed her secret satisfaction from her tutor; she remained silent, and the organist thus continued; "Oh, Urania, the organ of St. Paul's! and every organ in Paris will share the same fate!*

* With the exception of two, the organ of St. Sulpice, and that of St. Eustace, they were all sold in the above manner.

The melting of the bells raised sad forebodings in my mind; but who could have expected this last act of impiety? Alas! they destroy the very altars of devotion."—"Well, well, we can erect others in our own houses." "But to lay their sacreligious hands on the organ of St. Paul!"—"Well, my dear tutor, we shall still have piano-fortes you know."—"Piano-fortes! Can you compare the piano to the organ, to that sacred instrument, which is in itself an orchestra?—Oh Urania, think on the dreadful overthrow of religion, talent, and art. I not only lose my situation, but I am at the same time deprived of the means of exercising my profession. The little talent I possess cannot be displayed on the harpsichord. You play the piano better than I do; but the organ is totally different; it is on the organ alone that a musician can compose by inspiration, and the power of varying, of contrasting the different stops. And with regard to fugues! What is a fugue on the piano-forte? The pe-

dals of a piano only excite the contempt of an organist who has any soul. Can the piano give effect to the performance of *sostenuto* passages, or imitate the tones of the human voice? Never speak to me of pianos, Urania! I despise and hate them. We shall have no more organs! no more organists! The very idea confounds the imagination! A nation without organs!—O the Vandals!"—

These reflections plunged the unfortunate old man into such deep despair, that the same evening he was attacked by a fever. A physician was sent for, who administered sedutives, and recommended that he should be kept extrmeely low. This physician, who chanced to be his friend, was named Burmond: he was celebrated for his skill, and was employed by the most famous Jacobins; he had thus acquired considerable reputation, which he turned to the best account: he was obliging, compassionate, and ever ready to relieve distress.

Rozeval, perhaps with more disinte-

restedness than the poor organist, manifested the utmost indignation at the destruction of the organ of St. Paul: he even expressed himself in such imprudent terms, that he became *suspected*, that is to say, his death was determined on; and as he had lately returned from England, his enemies resolved to accuse him of *holding communication with Pitt and Coburg*.

Fortunately Burmond was informed of these malicious designs (and all such designs were at that time sure to prove fatal), and immediately communicated all he knew to the organist and the young lovers. Having procured passports for Rozeval under a fictitious name, he strenuously exhorted him to quit Paris, in company with an Irish gentleman, who was to set out the same evening for London. "Do not delay," continued Burmond, "recollect that your life is at stake." At these words the organist exclaimed, "then he will lose it in a glorious cause." He was, however, convinced of the ne-

cessity of accepting the offers of Burmond. Urania conjured Rozeval to depart without loss of time, but it was not without the utmost difficulty that he could be prevailed on to leave her amidst the enemies of the arts, who, he said, might in the end destroy pianofortes and flutes, and sacrifice all musicians. "Oh, be not concerned about flutes," rejoined Burmond, "their remnants will not produce money; organs are exterminated for the same reason that castles are demolished, but *cottages are respected* because they contain neither marble, bronze, lead nor stone!"—"Impiety and rapacity," exclaimed Rozeval, "are the real causes of all the horrors that are now committed; and shall I abandon Urania under such a government? No! never, never!"—"But, dear Rozeval," said Urania, "if your life be in danger I shall certainly die of grief and terror." The organist at length put an end to this agonizing conversation, by pledging his word that within a week he would him-

self convey Urania to rejoin Rozeval. "Whilst the organ of St. Paul's existed," added he, "hope chained me to Paris; but when I reflect that that instrument, the finest in all France, is broken up, and its pipes distributed among tinkers, what have I to detain me here? I am determined to visit England; there organs are still suffered to exist; and were it only for the pleasure of hearing and seeing them once again, I would gladly undertake the journey." —"But how?" enquired Rozeval.— "Leave that to me," interrupted Burmond, "I will furnish him with the means of quitting France."

Rozeval at length complied, but with bitter and profound affliction. The distress of Urania was no less severe; but a more dreadful shock was still in reserve for her.

The organist, whose dejection of spirits every day increased, was suddenly attacked by an alarming fit of illness; he became perfectly delirious, and the

recollection of the organ of St. Paul was constantly uppermost in his thoughts. He fancied he still beheld the crowd, disputing for the sad relics of that revered instrument. This continued agitation completely exhausted his strength: the fever, which had never entirely left him, became so violent, that it terminated his existence in less than five days. To aggravate this misfortune, an outcry was raised against the *incivism* of Urania. The physician, now her only protector, knowing that she was on the point of being arrested, found it impossible to assist her in escaping, because he had for several days been unable to procure passports.

In this extremity he conveyed her to his residence, and in the middle of the night concealed her in his own apartment. His next step was to accuse her before the *Committee of Public Safety.* His declaration purported, that she had fled with the view of rejoining her lover, Rozeval, an aristocrat and professor of

the flute, in the pay of Pitt and Coburg, and who had found means to escape to England. This pretended flight of Urania, this action so repugnant to all notions of propriety, was deemed the more scandalous by the decorous committee, since Urania was reported to have succeeded on the death of the organist to a rich legacy, chiefly in ready money, which she had carried off with her. Orders were immediately issued for tracing and pursuing the fugitive. Burmond prudently gave a false description of her person. The republicans warmly applauded his zeal, for accusation is the best proof of zeal in the opinion of tyrants.

Whilst the patriotism of Burmond was extolled, this praiseworthy man consoled himself for these ignominious eulogies, by devoting his whole attention to the wretched Urania, and bestowing on her all the care of an affectionate father.

One thing alone rendered Burmond uneasy, namely, Rozeval's imprudence.

It was impossible to risk such a secret in a letter; and even had he adopted so dangerous a step, he was certain that the anxiety of Rozeval would immediately hurry him to Paris, either in the hope of concealing himself, or merely with the romantic idea of sharing the dangers of Urania. It would have been easy to direct a letter in a strange hand, to assure him of Urania's safety, but on finding that she did not quickly arrive, it was certain that Rozeval would, in defiance of every danger, proceed to Paris: thus by sacrificing his own life, he would also expose that of Urania and her deliverer. If he should be arrested he would doubtless say, without intending it, a thousand things to implicate Burmond, for he would not fail to speak of his friendship. The grand object, therefore, was not merely to dissuade Rozeval from returning to France, but to prevent him from writing, or taking any step which might excite suspicion. After a thousand reflections, Burmond could devise but one

plan, which was, to persuade him that Urania was dead; this was indeed a cruel expedient, but Burmond resolved to adopt it, on reflecting that it might be the means of preserving Rozeval from inevitable destruction, perhaps of saving Urania's life and his own.

About this period Burmond was called on to attend the wife of a Swedish merchant, whose husband was in London upon business. This lady, who was reduced to the last extremity by an inflammation of the lungs, expired in a few days, and Burmond accordingly wrote a letter to the following effect:

"Summon all the fortitude, all the
" courage which may enable you to
" support the severest shock.—She has
" breathed her last!......in spite of all
" my efforts, and all the assistance of
" art. I sat up seven nights by her bed-
" side; she heaved her last sigh in my
" arms, requesting that I would enjoin
" you not to neglect those talents which
" you acquired and cultivated in her

" society: she desired that you would
" spend two or three years in Italy, but
" without passing through France. She
" earnestly conjured that I would direct
" you not to return thither even for a
" day. Such were her last wishes. You
" will hold them sacred if you loved her,
" as I have every reason to suppose
" you did."

Burmond having written this letter, folded it up in an envelope; on which he wrote the address of the Swedish merchant.

The physician had a pupil, on whose attachment he could rely: this young man was on the eve of visiting England as a mineralogist; he likewise intended to travel through Scotland and Ireland. As this young man was to reside some time in London, Burmond gave him the letter. He informed him that Urania had escaped, but that he was ignorant of her place of refuge, and merely knew she was concealed a few leagues from Paris; and that to prevent the fatal im-

prudence of Rozeval, it was necessary to persuade him she no longer existed. "I am aware," continued he, "of the cruelty of this stratagem, but it will be the means of saving his life, as well as that of his mistress, who is supposed to have quitted France, and is now no longer pursued. I therefore request that you will take charge of this letter. If on your way through France any inquiry should be made respecting your papers, shew it; it is not sealed, and being addressed to the Swedish merchant, whose wife is recently dead, the contents will be deemed perfectly unimportant, and will occasion you no inconvenience; but on your arrival in England, you will put it in an envelope directed to Rozeval, and may I entreat that you will forward it without loss of time."

Burmond's directions were strictly obeyed, and the letter was delivered to Rozeval. The despair of the unfortunate young man was too violent for consolation. He had many friends in Lon-

don, whom he owed not only to his talents and acquirements, but also to the excellence of his disposition: they did not desert him on this afflicting occasion. He fell dangerously ill, and even in his convalescence there was reason to apprehend that the violence of his grief might deprive him of reason: they succeeded in restoring him only by incessantly repeating that Urania had relied on his fortitude and virtue, and that she had enjoined him to cultivate his talents. "Alas!" said he, "I will fulfil her wishes if it be possible to survive her! But how can I again take up that flute, which from our earliest years has been the interpreter of my heart? Every note it hitherto produced expressed some feeling of joy or hope......*I have to cultivate my talent!*...... Alas! this talent which was created and brought to maturity by love, this useless and unfortunate talent no longer exists; it lies buried in Urania's tomb!...... Every elevated idea with which she inspired me, the

magic of the charms and glory of the arts, every sweet allusion,—all have vanished. I shall henceforth be a musician of the ordinary rank! I have irretrievably lost all enthusiasm, all hope of reward!" Whilst he uttered these words his countenance was suffused with tears. Nevertheless, from a feeling of religious respect for the last wishes of Urania, he requested that his flute might be brought to him—he shuddered to look upon it. He at first produced only plaintive and broken strains; and never did music so well express profound affliction. His friends were overcome with surprise and emotion: he himself listened with a feeling of melancholy delight. Then, as if anxious to give a death-blow to his broken heart, he began to play the accompaniment to Corelli's sonata; at the conclusion of the few first bars, a pause occurred for the flute, during which the melody was filled up by the harpsichord. Rozeval stopped, he became motionless, turned pale, and exclaimed in a voice

almost suffocated with horror, "Oh! this is not the silence of absence! It is dreadful,......insupportable! It must be eternal, it is the silence of death!" With these words his flute dropped from his hand, he trembled, and one of his friends ran and caught him in his arms.

These overpowering emotions did not prevent him from practising the flute every evening, though he invariably experienced the same agony and the same affliction.

Having at length resolved to repair to Italy, he accepted the offer of an English nobleman who was about to depart for Florence, and who expressed a wish that Rozeval should accompany him. They set out at the beginning of March, and arrived at Florence towards the latter end of April. The nobleman proposed remaining in Florence at least for five months, and Rozeval, whose dejection of spirits rendered him unable to sit down to dine every day with a party of twenty or thirty, requested permission

to spend some time at Rome. It was not a wish to see that famous city which induced him to quit Florence. Nothing so effectually damps curiosity as profound grief. Rozeval merely wished to devote himself to absolute solitude. He was furnished with numerous letters of recommendation; but, being determined not to mingle with society, he made no use of them. His patrimony insured to him the means of subsistence without exercising his profession: it was sufficient, for he no longer possessed ambition, nor felt any concern for the future.

Rozeval took a lodging at Rome, which he never quitted, except to go to church, or to walk out beyond the walls of the city. Faithful to his vow of obeying the last wishes of Urania, he always played on his flute before he went abroad, for he was usually so fatigued with his long walks, that on his return home he immediately retired to rest. He soon became known, notwithstanding his wish to live in retirement. His interesting

and dejected appearance excited the attention of all his neighbours. The window of his apartment looked towards the front yard of the house in which he lodged, and whenever he sat down to practice his flute the yard was filled with people, who flocked from all quarters to hear him. Among the rest were many eminent musicians, who were delighted with his exquisite performance. He received numberless cards of invitation, which he answered only by cold and laconic politeness, and occasionally by positive refusals. Among those who vainly endeavoured to form an acquaintance with him was a young widow named Rosama, who was passionately fond of music. She was so delighted with Rozeval's performance on the flute that she every evening repaired to the front yard of his house, and listened to him with transport. One day, having concealed herself behind a door, she saw Rozeval pass by: she admired his elegant and dignified deportment, and his melan-

choly and interesting countenance. This image was indelibly engraven on her heart. Rozeval was dressed in mourning: his servant informed her that he had recently lost an adored wife. Several persons who had arrived from Florence concurred in praising his genius and excellent disposition. Rosama eagerly listened to all these eulogies; she was young, rich, and beautiful, and flattered herself that she might in a little time succeed in consoling this stranger, whose person, talent, and sorrow rendered him so interesting. She was acquainted with Lorenzi, who, as I have already stated, furnished me with these particulars. Lorenzi lodged in the same house as Rozeval, and their apartments were separated only by a slight partition.

Rosama, under pretence of her passion for music, repaired almost every day with one of her relations to Lorenzi's, at the hour which Rozeval usually devoted to practicing the flute. When he played extempore, he expressed such tender and

affecting regret, that Rosama could not refrain from shedding tears. She even fancied that the unfortunate young man was unfolding his heart to her, and imploring her pity; and, in the hope of consoling him, she experienced a melancholy satisfaction by persuading herself that she was his confidante, for she supposed he could not possibly be ignorant that she was listening to him: and yet such was really the case—for Rozeval asked no questions, nor did he ever notice what was passing around him. He had indeed, on one or two occasions, observed that people assembled in front of the house to hear him play, but he was in hopes that this whim would soon wear away. Yet as curiosity seemed to be daily increasing, he resolved to get rid of the importunity, and henceforth to practice the flute only in his solitary rambles. He resolved to spend an hour every evening in a charming spot which he had remarked on the banks of the Tiber, at a short distance from the Porto del Popolo;

it was a bank of green turf surrounded by reeds, which on the borders of the Tiber grow to a prodigious height. Three stately poplars overhung this bank, which had doubtless been raised on the margin of this celebrated stream by some friend of the muses and antiquity. There every thing seems to encourage meditation; every object revives the sublime recollections of history clothed in the captivating illusions of mythology. When the reeds are agitated by a gentle breeze they emit a variety of sounds, which by blending together produce a kind of vague and delicious symphony. These plaintive and affecting tones are almost always a succession of perfect thirds, and pass alternately from the major to the minor mode. They seem to breathe the lamentations of the fugitive Syrinx, or the sorrows expressed on the first flute of which her lover was the inventor. These singular effects are attributed to the extraordinary height and thickness of these reeds; and when they bend and

strike against each other, their harmonious vibrations serve as an accompaniment to the wind, which plays among the hollow and sonorous stems :—it is an aërial melody, as pure as delicious, and of which the Æolian harp can alone convey an idea.*

Rosama, who no longer heard from Lorenzi's apartment the enchanting and plaintive tones of Rozeval's flute, soon discovered that he was accustomed to retire every evening to the banks of the Tiber. She readily guessed that he visited the lovely bank of turf; she was well acquainted with the spot, where during her walks she had herself a thousand times reposed with delight, and she imagined that it would be very easy to proceed thither unobserved, and to conceal herself among the reeds, which grew in such numbers that they formed a kind of forest.

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* There is no exaggeration in the above description.

Rozeval lived in profound retirement. He had not asked a single question during his five weeks residence at Rome, and he was consequently wholly unacquainted with the phenomenon produced by the reeds of the Tiber. During his few first visits to this solitary spot the weather was calm, and the reeds remained mute and motionless. He visited it a few days afterwards, but he had scarcely played a quarter of an hour when the reeds were fanned by several sudden breezes. Rozeval started, and in a trembling voice exclaimed: "What do I hear! Oh Heaven, she answers me! It is her celestial voice and the harmonious tones of her harp. Her angelic spirit hovers around me! Let me bend on my knees to listen to her!" At this instant three reeds, agitated by the wind, bent over his head, and their harmonious tones sounded in his ear. Rozeval continued kneeling, and was melted into tears; he fancied he was listening to Urania. His imagination pictured her amidst a group of an-

gels, blending their divine voices with hers. The wind, which had produced the motion of the reeds, also wafted to the banks of the Tiber the sweet perfumes of the adjacent flower gardens and surrounding lemon trees. Rozeval fancied that he inhaled the balmy ether of the celestial abodes, to which he imagined himself transported. These overpowering and sanctified illusions banished every profane idea from his mind, and for a few moments deprived his sorrow of its wonted bitterness. He beheld nothing dreadful in the approach of death: he was surrounded by the glory and immortality of Urania. The wind now abated; a slight breeze still gently agitated the long leaves of the reeds: Rozeval heard only faint and interrupted sounds resembling sighs, which his imagination construed into tender adieus!

Evening was approaching, a mist arose suddenly, which Rozeval mistook for a light cloud, and his agitation equalled his surprise on discovering through this sup-

posed cloud the slender figure of a female with outstretched arms, who appeared as she receded to soar towards heaven: a thin white drapery displayed all the symmetry of her form and all the gracefulness of her motions. "Oh! it is she!" exclaimed Rozeval, "It is she!"—"Yes," replied a melodious voice, "Adieu Rozeval!" With these words she disappeared. Rozeval stood motionless on the bank. The mist ascended and mingled with the clouds. Rozeval, with strained and uplifted eyes, still contemplated Urania. He did not experience the evanescent transports of the human passions, which ever leaves the mind a prey to restlessness: his sensations were as delicious as they were pure: he was no longer an exile on earth, he had seen heaven, he had entered the abodes of the blessed. He will henceforth be among men only a phantom, a shadow: this apparition had broken all the bonds which attached his soul to a frail and perishable body. He passed two hours in this divine extacy, and these

were the happiest hours of his life. He constantly repeated "*She is happy; and we shall meet again!*" His mind was no longer tortured by the melancholy foreboding of a passion destined to be extinguished with the ardour of youth: it was an attachment purified by the noblest ideas that can exalt the imagination; it was the commencement of immortal felicity! The moon, bursting through the clouds, suddenly dispelled the gloom; every thing appeared a prodigy to Rozeval, he viewed this sudden light as supernatural: with eyes raised towards heaven, he contemplated, amidst emotions of love and gratitude, that bright orb which seemed to shine forth only to light him on his way. On his return home, he passed the greater part of the night in meditating on what he had heard and seen. At length, overpowered by sleep, he closed his eyes, pronouncing the name of Urania, and he again beheld her angelic image and Heaven in his dreams. Whilst the ardour of his imagination thus sanc-

tified his love, Rosama was enveloped in illusions of a different kind:—it was she who, having concealed herself among the reeds of the Tiber to listen to Rozeval's flute, had disappeared from his sight; it was she whom he beheld through the mist when he imagined he saw Urania rise from the bosom of the river and ascend to Heaven.

Rosama had several times met Rozeval, who had sometimes unconsciously cast an indifferent glance at her: but what pretty woman of twenty can imagine that she is repeatedly looked at with indifference, especially when she feels an anxious desire to please and interest? Rozeval's eyes were dark and languishing, and Rosama, attributing their natural expression to a particular sentiment, flattered herself that she had made a deep impression on his heart. When she quitted her place of concealment among the reeds in order to return to her carriage, she had through the mist perceived Rozeval at a short dis-

tance, and distinctly heard him exclaim, "*It is she!*" These words were engraven on her heart; being fully convinced that they were addressed to her, and that Rozeval recognised her, she could not forbear replying. She, however, felt no inclination to revisit the banks of the Tiber. Rozeval had seen her; the exclamation which escaped him expressed all that love can desire—namely, agitation and joy: it was for him henceforward to seek for opportunities of communicating with her, but she looked for him in vain. Rozeval had seen without noticing her: he was ignorant of her name, and even of her existence; he now retained but one recollection—the celestial harmony of the reeds of the Tiber; the image of his beloved Urania seemed constantly hovering before him; all that occurred previously to the moment of transport and ecstasy, when he fancied he beheld her spirit, was now erased from his memory: he no longer called to mind the happy days of

his early love: this recollection was too profane for the sublimity of his thoughts and imagination. He fancied he had never loved Urania until he beheld her on the banks of the Tiber: there he felt and tasted, for the first time, all the charms and purity of an immortal passion. Worldly interest was an object on which he could never more bestow a thought. He sought only to render himself worthy of meeting his Urania in Heaven.

He usually offered up his morning devotions in the beautiful church of St. Peter, and in the evening repaired to the banks of the Tiber; but the ærial harmony of the reeds was no longer audible: the atmosphere was scorching, and not even the gentlest breeze rose to refresh it. This state of the weather continued for upwards of a fortnight. Rozeval was by no means astonished to find that the phenomenon which had so deeply affected him was not repeated; yet the harmonious spot was not the less dear to him, for it never failed to excite melan-

choly recollections and reveries. One evening, having lingered near the reeds of the Tiber later than his usual hour, he perceived by the gloominess of the night that a storm was gathering, and hastily proceeded homeward. On entering his apartment he felt greatly fatigued, and instantly lay down to rest. About two hours afterwards he suddenly awoke—his heart throbbed violently—he heard a murmuring noise—and listening, recognized the enchanting sound of the reeds of the Tiber. But instead of a combination of harmonious chords, it seemed to be only a single voice, modulating mysteriously, as if fearful of disturbing his slumbers. Rozeval clasped his hands with transport, his countenance was suffused with tears. "Divine voice!" he exclaimed, "you doubtless remind me of some good actions which I have neglected to perform. Oh! beloved voice! every vibration of which conveys some virtuous sentiment to my soul, I will obey you!" As he uttered these

words the music ceased, and Rozeval listened in vain during the remainder of the night. All was silent.

He rose early in the morning, and recollecting that he had seen several ruinous cottages in the neighbourhood of the Tiber, near the Villa-Borghese, he determined to visit them, and to carry with him some money to distribute among the poor inhabitants.

Rozeval every morning devoted some time to a private journal in which he kept a register of his thoughts and meditations, and detailed the supposed miracles of which he fancied himself to be at once the witness and the object. He as usual proceeded to his cabinet as soon as he rose. The window of this apartment looked towards a large balcony, in which stood a box filled with flowers. Rozeval opened the window, and stood petrified with amazement on beholding three beautiful reeds standing erect among the flowers, and which, on being agitated by the motion of the window, produced

the most melodious vibrations. These reeds were upwards of eight feet in height, and their tone was peculiarly enchanting. Rozeval could not fail to recognise the reeds of the Tiber, which he was convinced must have been transported thither by some supernatural hand. ......The divine harmony which he heard during the night was now immediately accounted for. This new phenomenon did not admit of the least shadow of doubt; Rozeval nevertheless questioned his servant, who protested, in the most confident way, that he had never for a moment quitted the house during the whole of the preceding evening, and that no one could possibly have entered the apartment. Rozeval readily believed him, for who could suspect the impression which the very sight of the reeds of the Tiber never failed to produce on him!......His sentiments were as unknown as his actions. His life had become a series of miracles, which he conceived were thus multiplied only to warn

him that his exile was drawing to a close, and that he should speedily be united with the angel who summoned him in so many various ways.

It will be readily conjectured that Rozeval was deceived by his servant, who had been bribed by Rosama to place the reeds in the box of flowers. Rozeval walked out in the afternoon to visit the cottages, which were situated at a short distance from his favorite bank among the reeds of the Tiber. He found the poor inhabitants in the utmost misery, and he administered his charity, accompanied by those consolations with which gentle pity always bestows her benefits. On quitting the cottages he unconsciously proceeded towards the gardens of the Villa-Borghese, which were totally unknown to him. A slight shower of rain had dispersed the company, and Rozeval was absolutely the only individual in the gardens. He wandered up and down without knowing where he went: when

suddenly advancing towards a magnificent cascade, he started—an indescribable agitation overwhelmed him......What he now heard was not a vague succession of unmeaning sounds......it was not the aeriel vibrations of the reeds of the Tiber ......it was real music, and the music of all others most dear to his recollection ......it was *Corelli's beautiful sonata*, performed with all its rich and varied accompaniments! ...... The last rays of daylight were still faintly lingering; Rozeval looked around him on every side; as far as his eye could reach, he saw neither orchestra nor musician; he was alone! ......Trembling, bewildered, he advanced towards the cascade: the concert became more and more brilliant as he approached......there, beneath the spouts of the silvery waterfall, there dwelt the enchantment. Rozeval was firmly convinced that this magical execution of Corelli's sonata was produced solely by the varied murmuring of the

cascade.* "Oh!" exclaimed Rozeval, "this is the enchanting music which, during our days of happiness in this world, so often served to interpret our innocent loves. Oh! Urania, thou hast borne it with thee to Heaven!......The purity of thy soul has wafted to eternity every sentiment by which thou wert animated during thy short career of mortality!...... With what holy enthusiasm should I listen to these celestial strains, which are repeated by angels, and are blended with the praises of the Almighty!......what ear is worthy to receive them!...... Let me banish every earthly recollection which they may tend to revive!"......He then fell on his knees; his lips were rivetted together, he listened, and his emotion became so violent, that his strength failed him;

* By an ingenious mechanical contrivance, the cascade in the gardens of the Villa-Borghese really performs Corelli's sonata. There is at Naples a musical cascade of the same description.

he swooned, and fell prostrate on the grass!......He remained for upwards of an hour in a state of total insensibility ......at length, the rain having ceased, several persons again returned to the garden, and by good fortune Lorenzi was among the number. He advanced towards the cascade, he recognised Rozeval, and exerted every effort to restore him. He raised him in his arms, and carried him to a couch in one of the pavillions of the garden. At length Rozeval, in some measure, recovered his senses; he no longer heard the music of the cascade, and exclaimed: "Alas! am I again sent back to this world!......" He raised his eyes and recognized Lorenzi, whom he had occasionally met in the house where he lodged. Lorenzi, who had left his carriage without the gates of the Borghese gardens, proposed to convey Rozeval home, and the latter being unable to support himself, was under the necessity of accepting a place in the carriage. Lorenzi offered him his

arm, with a degree of interest and sensibility which seemed to penetrate the heart of Rozeval. He expressed his thanks in terms of the sincerest gratitude, and then maintained the profoundest silence. Lorenzi did not deem it prudent to trouble him with questions. On reaching their residence they alighted from the carriage, but Rozeval's state of exhaustion rendered him incapable of ascending the stairs. Lorenzi carried him to his apartment and immediately sent for a physician, who found him in a violent state of fever. Lorenzi sat by his bedside the whole of the night:—Rozeval, who was fully sensible to all the kind attentions he received, expressed his gratitude in the most affecting terms; he however declared that all the resources of art would be unavailing: "My last hour is arrived," said he; "but let not your compassionate mind be afflicted for my sake; I am tranquil and happy." "How!" exclaimed Lorenzi, "at so early an age, can it be possible that you thus willingly resign yourself to the grave?"

..."Religion alone," replied Rozeval, "has frequently brought about the effects which in me are produced by a pure and holy passion. A most miraculous path has led me to this contempt of life. Ask me no more questions, dear Lorenzi: were I to relate all that has happened to me since I have resided in Rome, you would not give me credit—you would look upon me as a wild visionary; but I will prove my gratitude by the only mark of confidence which it is in my power to bestow. I have written my own history, and will give you the manuscript with permission to read it after my death."......"Oh! do not talk of death," interrupted Lorenzi, "your case presents no dangerous symptoms." A melancholy smile was the only reply made by Rozeval. At this moment a friar, whom he had sent for, entered the apartment, and the conversation ended. Lorenzi withdrew, and did not return for three or four hours.

On the following day the physician was of opinion that Rozeval was considerably

better, and he confidently foretold his speedy recovery. "Then you think," said Rozeval, "that I have still sufficient courage to resign myself to life!"—These words inspired Lorenzi with the tenderest compassion; he could not, without the utmost sorrow, behold an interesting young man thus consumed by silent affliction, without seeking the slightest consolation, and even rejecting all that was offered him.

Yet Rozeval was far from being unhappy; in the confidence of hereafter enjoying supreme felicity, his ardent and pure soul rested tranquilly on the bosom of eternity, and far from experiencing a moment of vacancy and lassitude, his mind was but too constantly occupied; yielding to all the workings of his bewildered imagination, the illusions which he so fondly cherished produced the most fatal effects on his nerves and constitution. Gratitude compelled him to receive the visits of Lorenzi, yet he constantly maintained an obstinate silence. Lorenzi frequently

entered his apartment, but he never remained with him long at a time. Rozeval still manifested some symptoms of fever, and his debility was extreme. Being no longer capable of visiting the banks of the Tiber, he proceeded every evening to his cabinet, which, ever since the adventure of the reeds transplanted to the box of flowers, had been closed against every mortal but himself. He usually seated himself opposite to the window and contemplated the miraculous reeds; his imagination then became exalted by degrees, he every moment expected to behold an apparition; he trembled violently at the slightest noise, and never quitted the enchanted cabinet without an alarming increase of fever. He sometimes endeavoured to play Corelli's sonata, but in vain; his fingers trembled, he breathed with difficulty, and the half articulated tones of the flute expired upon his burning lips. He fancied he was profaning the divine strains of melody which had been admitted into the abodes of the

blessed, and which he was again destined to hear at the foot of the eternal throne. This constant agitation of mind so exhausted his strength that he was no longer capable of sustaining violent emotion, and he seemed to be rapidly verging towards the close of his existence. This idea had been firmly impressed on his mind ever since his visit to the gardens of the Villa Borghese: but it was no longer a vague foreboding of his fancy, it had now become deep rooted certainty.

Rosama, on being informed of his situation, made useless endeavours to see him. To her his conduct appeared in the last degree unaccountable. She was alarmed for his safety, and continual apprehension and uneasiness shortly produced the most fatal effects on her health. She was attacked by a violent fever, which for four or five days confined her to her apartment. In the meanwhile Rozeval manifested no signs of convalescence, on the contrary his debility every day increased; his disorder manifested the most

singular character: in proportion as his body decayed, his mind seemed to acquire new vigour. He was indeed near the fulfilment of all his hopes and wishes.

One evening, before retiring, as usual, to his cabinet, he sent for Lorenzi, who came to him immediately, although particular business at that moment called him abroad. Rozeval presented to him a large sealed packet: "Here," said he, "are the manuscripts which I promised you; they contain my whole history; do not read them until I am in my grave, you may then do with them what you please; it would perhaps be well if the youth of the present age were made acquainted with my story......Receive them as a pledge of my gratitude." Lorenzi, deeply affected, took the packet: "I will," said he, "merely take charge of these manuscripts until you recover your health. I will then return them. At present business of importance obliges me instantly to go out.—I shall be home before your hour of retiring to rest, and I hope

you will afford me the pleasure of a few moments conversation with you." With these words he embraced Rozeval, and hastily departed. Rozeval immediately proceeded to his cabinet; he lighted the alabaster lamp which hung from the ceiling and opened the window. He then seated himself before the box of flowers, and fell into his accustomed reverie: the evening was serene, the moon darted her brilliant beams on every side. Rozeval fixed his eyes on the reeds, and perceived that they had changed colour since the morning......they were now perfectly yellow!......He stretched forth his hand and plucked off one of their withered leaves, which broke as he touched it, and instantly fell to powder. ......" The sovereign power," said he, " which conveyed these reeds hither, placed them before my eyes only that they might announce my destiny!...... They have lost the smiling hue of spring, and I no longer retain the bloom and vigour of youth!......Like them, I am

bowed down and withered;—we shall doubtless perish together......and the hour is now at hand!"......As he uttered these words, the secret instinct which attaches us to life forced a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, and his cheek was moistened with a tear; but this emotion, so contrary to all his thoughts, was as vague and confused as it was fugitive. Rozeval raised his eyes, and never before did the tranquil and majestic beauty of Heaven produce so deep an impression upon him; with his arms folded on his bosom, he remained some moments in the most transporting extacy!......This contemplation diffused a calm and delicious melancholy over his soul!......"Oh! real refuge of hope," he exclaimed, "I shall at length enjoy thy promised blessings! ......Soon, freed from the chains of mortality, I shall be transported to the foot of the eternal throne, between Urania and my father!......Oh! how radiant must be those celestial abodes to which that vault, sparkling with stars,

serves as a footpath! Oh! abode of everlasting peace and immortality, where I shall enjoy the divine felicity of loving without sorrow, and of admiring sublime and supreme perfection!"......As he uttered these words, a refreshing breeze suddenly arose, and two of the reeds striking forcibly against each other, broke and fell at the feet of Rozeval!......He started back with horror!......At this moment he heard a noise, he turned; the door of the cabinet opened, and he uttered an involuntary shriek......What object now appeared before him......He saw Urania, dressed in white, and more lovely than ever, rushing forward to embrace him: it was no illusion, it was Urania herself; but Rozeval beheld only a shadow, an angel who had come to receive his soul and to convey it to everlasting bliss......"Thou art come to summon me," said he, in a faltering voice......"I am ready."......With these words he threw himself at Urania's feet, and fancying he was united to her by

death, which was now about to separate them, he heaved forth his last sigh, with all the religious and impassioned transport of the purest joy!......The terrified Urania supposed he had merely fainted. She was unable to account for his surprise and agitation, for she had dispatched two messengers to prepare him for her arrival, but some accident had probably prevented them from fulfilling her instructions!......She called for assistance; the servant entered, and with the aid of the trembling Urania conveyed Rozeval to his apartment....Lorenzi had not yet returned; the servants of the house were dispatched in search of a physician, who immediately stated that Rozeval had breathed his last...... At this terrible declaration, the unfortnnate Urania was bereft of reason......In the meanwhile Lorenzi returned home, and was quickly informed of all that had taken place. He conveyed Urania from the fatal apartment, resigned his own lodg-

ings to her use, and hired women to attend on her, for she was accompanied only by an old man-servant with whom she had escaped from France. Lorenzi used the utmost caution in communicating the melancholy catastrophe to Rosama; she was scarcely convalescent, and Lorenzi well knew her attachment for Rozeval: his attention was divided between her and the wretched Urania. He read Rozeval's manuscripts to Rosama, but he could never venture to communicate them to Urania. Rosama thus learnt that she had never been beloved, and that all her sentiments and actions had only tended to fortify the illusions of Rozeval, and his fidelity to a shadow. She wept repeatedly, but her love was chiefly in her head: an agreeable and sympathizing confidant quickly succeeded in consoling her. Urania never uttered a syllable of complaint; she made no enquiries, and answered none that were put to her; she merely expressed a wish to enter a con-

vent. Rosama manifested the most tender interest for her fate; she offered her an asylum in her own house, which however Urania declined, and earnestly entreated that she would procure her one within the walls of a monastery. Lorenzi at length presented her with Rozeval's manuscripts, at the same time explaining the supposed miracles of the reeds of the Tiber, and the cascade of the Borghese Palace. On the following day Urania for the first time walked abroad, accompanied by her old servant. It was well known that she visited the Borghese gardens and the banks of the Tiber; she brought home a reed, with which she never parted, and which she carried to her grave, for it was, at her own request, laid in the coffin by her side. She recommended her old servant to the care of Lorenzi, who still retains him in his service. Finally, the inconsolable Urania, who was equally interesting for her beauty, her youth, and her silent and

uncomplaining sorrow, retired to a convent and took the veil. She made her vows at the termination of a year, and expired a few months afterwards with all the tranquillity of innocence and pious resignation.

THE
WIDOW OF LUZI.

THE

WIDOW OF LUZI.

AN ANECDOTE.*

I HAVE read that a warlike monarch, after a brilliant victory, shed tears when he beheld, on the field of battle, the vast multitude of men who had been deprived of existence by a premeditated design, by his deliberate wish and express command. Historians inform us, with admiration, that the *susceptibility* of this Prince was so extreme that he wept instead of rejoicing when he saw the enemy's army completely annihilated, and his own half destroyed. Thus must

* The event which forms the subject of this story took place in 1814, at Luzi, a little city of Burgundy.

sovereigns ever pay for brilliant victories, for crowns of laurel and the enthusiasm of poets. But a tear from the eye of a prince, shed at the proper moment, is sufficient to expiate and repair all the ravages and massacres of a campaign, and even of a reign. However, an old captain, a person rarely met with in the courts of victorious kings, advanced and said, in a firm tone of voice:—"Yes, Prince, it is indeed horrible to look on these bleeding and mutilated bodies; these conquerors disarmed by death, and stretched on the bosoms of the enemies they sacrificed! but the unseen consequences of a battle may nevertheless present a spectacle a thousand times more appalling than the one before us. These brave warriors, thus heaped together and levelled with the dust, no longer suffer; they are released from the horrors and the tyranny of sanguinary ambition! but how dreadful is the fate of those who loved them, and who are destined to survive their loss! ......What would be your reflections,

Prince, if that innumerable legion of your distressed fellow creatures suddenly appeared before you? if the fathers and mothers of these ill fated soldiers, their widows and their children, overwhelming with their cries and imprecations the joyful hymns of victory, should throng round you with horrible tumult, and demand an account of all the blood you have shed? whither would you fly to evade their fury? To your car of triumph? alas! the avenging hand of despair would have reduced it to atoms"......We know not what reply the prince made to all this, but it is more than probable that the old philosophic captain was sent to moralize on some desert island, far from courts, kings, and heroes.

Every mother in France has however shared the sentiments of this old soldier, and particularly since the commencement of the nineteenth century! yet they have not been insensible to the brilliant victories gained by our intrepid armies; a Frenchwoman is equally attached to her

country and to glory. The inability of bestowing on their children an education conformable to their natural dispositions was a powerful cause of affliction. The government held out encouragement only to soldiers; this was a just subject of regret to all families, and it was keenly felt in every class of society. No mother was more grievously afflicted by this state of things than the good widow of Luzi, whose affecting history would lose half its interest were it related in a style of affected eloquence; in this artless narrative the simplest language must be the best, because it will always accord with the character, conduct, and sentiments of the heroine.

Madame Miller was the widow of a merchant who resided in the pretty little city of Luzi, in Burgundy. This merchant, who was understood to be rich, had towards the latter end of his life embarked in various unsuccessful speculations; he left so many debts, that his property was barely sufficient to discharge them.

His widow, however, satisfied the demands of all his creditors; and from a feeling of respect to the memory of her husband, she generously surrendered her own dowry. This conduct excited admiration; yet her relations represented that, as she could not be compelled to make these sacrifices, she ought to reflect on the welfare of her child. "I do reflect on it," she replied; "but is it not better that my son should be poor and enjoy a spotless reputation, than rich with the disgraceful name of bankrupt?" All the inhabitants of Luzi acknowledged the truth of these observations; such sentiments are still general in the provinces of France.

Madame Miller's whole fortune consisted in an annual income of one thousand francs, and a little house in the city of Luzi. Prudent economy, however, enabled her to enjoy the comforts of life, and she found happiness in peace of conscience, maternal tenderness, and the esteem of her family and neighbours. She was known by the name of the good

widow; and when she walked through the streets of Luzi, leading her charming little boy by the hand, she was saluted with sincere respect, and gazed on with admiration. She never turned a deaf ear to the complaints of the distressed, nor cruelly desired the poor to go and work, as if there were always manufactories standing open to receive them, and work to be done, which indolence prevented them from undertaking!......The good widow, on the contrary, gave her little son a piece of money, which he presented to the beggar, at the same time taking off his little round hat, for his *mother always taught him to respect* misfortune; and when she read in the Gospel the story of the widow who cast her mite into the treasury, the child embraced her and exclaimed: "Mamma, that is what you do!"

The most intimate friend of Madame Miller was her neighbour Madame Bernard, a poor widow like herself, and almost equally virtuous. Madame Ber-

nard had an only daughter named Emilia, who was precisely the age of Alexis. The two children were born on the same day, and in two houses separated from each other only by a slight partition-wall, and finally they were baptized together in the church of their parish. Madame Miller and her friend did not fail to remark all these circumstances; they seemed indeed to be the commencement of a romance. The two infants had fair hair and blue eyes, their complexions were beautifully transparent, and there was so striking a resemblance between them that they might readily have been mistaken for twins; it was even remarked that though their features were in many respects different, they preserved, as they grew up, the most perfect likeness to each other. They evinced a charming conformity of disposition, and every succeeding year rendered them more and more interesting. Being accustomed to see each other every day, their mutual attachment was as firmly rooted as though

they had been brother and sister. Alexis, however, frequently preferred flying his kite and playing at ninepins with boys of his own age, to taking his Sunday dessert of fruit and sweetmeats in company with Emilia. But a circumstance soon arose which formed an interesting epoch in their attachment. It was determined with the curate of the parish that the two children, who had just attained their twelfth year, should receive the sacrament together on the day of a great religious festival.

This was an important affair to the two widows, who were now to exhibit their children in so solemn and honourable a way before the assembled inhabitants of the parish! Madame Bernard was particularly interested; she was resolved that Emilia should appear to the very best advantage! Her godmother, who was rich, undertook to defray the expenses of adorning her for the occasion. Emilia, for the first time in her life, wore a fine silk dress, and her beautiful fair hair was

plaited and interwoven with pearls and flowers. She saw so much time and attention devoted to her toilette, that at length she herself began to consider it as a matter of some importance, and she entered the church not without an exceedingly profane emotion. Alexis, who was beautiful as an angel without even knowing it, offered her his hand to conduct her. He examined Emilia's dress with an eye of curiosity; he thought it surprisingly magnificent: but he soon heard the spectators on every side whispering, what a charming little couple! and his attention was immediatety turned to another object; he gazed on the face and figure of Emilia—she had never before appeared so beautiful, and he imagined that she alone was the subject of admiration. These flattering whispers however, produced a very different effect on Emilia; she applied all the praises to herself, for her dress was far more costly than the one Alexis wore, and she was moreover adorned with a pearl necklace

and a crown of roses!......Alexis, who had at length remarked the graces of Emilia's person, became every day more and more agreeable to her. Notwithstanding the little feeling of pride inspired by her magnificent dress, Emilia was in reality far more susceptible than vain: she shared, with all the candour of her age, an attachment which was destined ultimately to decide the fate of both.

In the meanwhile Alexis manifested the happiest facility in learning everything to which his attention was directed. The curate of the parish, charmed with his docility and intelligence, undertook to teach him Latin, in which he made surprising progress; one of his mother's friends at the same time gave him instructions in mathematics, for which he evinced particular taste. He made rapid advancement in everything, and shewed the same aptitude for various other studies to which he voluntarily devoted some portion of his time. His mother, who

devoted all her little savings to his education, occasionally sent him to Dijon where a relation of her own resided. He so far exceeded the expectations of his masters, that one of them undertook to procure him an advantageous place in the university of Paris, whenever he should attain his eighteenth year: he was now just seventeen. The good widow had attained the summit of her hopes; with what gratitude she thanked Heaven for having opened to her son a career which his talent would enable him to pursue with success, and which would ensure to him fortune, glory and happiness! for he was to be rewarded with the hand of Emilia. The two lovers, whose innocent attachment had never yet been troubled by misfortune, beheld only cloudless felicity in the prospect of their future lives. They adored each other with all the candour and enthusiasm of a first passion, joined to all the security arising from habit and long tried constancy. For the last two years Madame Miller

had occasionally felt apprehensive on account of the conscription ; but she hoped that a little money and interest would ensure the safety of her son. She now quitted her house and hired a small lodging. About this time an unexpected event suddenly changed the fortune of Emilia. A distant relation died and left her a legacy of one hundred and fifty thousand francs. This circumstance excited some uneasiness in the mind of Madame Miller. She fancied she observed a degree of coolness in the manners of Emilia's mother, who now talked of making a journey to Paris !......Ah ! my son, said she, Emilia has become rich ! Madame Bernard is no longer what she formerly was !......But Emilia will never change, replied Alexis.—And what if her mother should withdraw her consent? said Madame Miller.—Emilia will not certainly marry contrary to her mother's wishes ; but we can wait until I have made a fortune likewise.—You, Alexis ! exclaimed his mother.—Yes, to render you happy

and to obtain the hand of Emilia.—Oh! my Alexis, Heaven will doubtless listen to your prayers, they are so pure and virtuous!—I deserve nothing yet, he replied, I have hitherto lived only to enjoy your care and bounty; but Heaven will protect me to bless you.

A few days after this conversation all Madame Miller's fears were happily banished. Madame Bernard had indeed attempted to inspire her daughter with those feelings of ambition which she could not repress in her own mind; but Emilia replied with so much good sense, respect and tenderness, she so forcibly represented the sanctity of an engagement which had been contracted in the days of her early childhood, and above all so fondly extolled the virtue and talent of Alexis, that her mother hastened to Madame Miller and renewed all her promises with an effusion of sincere sensibility. The joy of the young lovers and of Madame Miller was indescribable; the good widow could find no language to express her

feelings, she could merely repeat: "Ah! I am too happy!" Six months of enchantment rapidly passed away; but a death-blow was in reserve to annihilate this pure felicity!

The war continued to rage with fury, and extraordinary reverses quickly produced the most violent measures. The youth of France were hastily summoned. They were called upon to face the enemy, glory was promised them and they crowded to the standard of their country: it was necessary to replace four hundred thousand men who had been buried in the snows of a desert, and the ranks of these noble victims of war were speedily filled up. Never did intrepid courage so promptly repair the ravages of death.

Alexis was now seventeen, he received orders to depart, and it was his earnest wish to do so. Notwithstanding the despair of his mother and the tears of Emilia he enrolled himself in a regiment of dragoons. Emilia was overwhelmed with distress when she parted with Alexis; but

on seeing how much a helmet added to the beauty of his countenance, she felt an indescribable emotion, which very closely approached consolation. The warlike dress served the more forcibly to remind the poor mother of the dangers her son was about to incur, and the sight of the military uniform freezed her with horror. After the departure of her beloved Alexis, Madame Miller took the key of his chamber and said: "I am resolved that until my son's return this apartment shall not be entered either by myself or any one else." She accordingly locked the door and carefully laid by the key. Her son, who had promised to write to her after every engagement, for a long time kept his word. The good widow passed her whole time in the society of Emilia; the latter spoke only of Alexis, he was the constant subject of her thoughts: yet Madame Miller wsa not entirely satisfied with her, she could have wished to see a delicacy of uneasiness and continuity of distress of

which a maternal heart is alone susceptible.

The wish for peace had now become general, but the war was nevertheless carried on with unabated fury, and foreign armies at length invaded France! ...... After the battle of Brienne, no tidings were heard of Alexis, and his mother then became a prey to violent and well founded apprehension. By a revulsion of feeling which those who love can alone comprehend, Madame Miller who had hitherto desired to see Emilia more distressed and agitated, was now unable to endure her dejection and tears; now, when there was every just ground for alarm, the unhappy mother wished to be flattered; the grief and consternation of Emilia seemed to announce the worst of misfortunes! She now carefully avoided seeing her. Every moment increased the anguish and distress of the poor widow, and whenever she passed by the door of her son's apartment, she trembled, and her countenance

was bathed in tears! She received no visitors, and lived in profound seclusion. Her only companion was a little maid servant about thirteen years old, whom she had hired after her son's departure. She preferred having with her a girl of this age in order that she might live in absolute ignorance of the affairs of the army, which at Luzi formed the general subject of conversation among all classes of people.

One morning as Madame Miller was pensively seated at her window, she saw a waggon filled with wounded soldiers proceeding up the street!...... At this sight a thousand confused and opposite sentiments agitated her oppressed heart!...... Perhaps he is is there! she said within herself......A vague feeling of desire and hope was mingled with her terror and the horrible idea of seeing her son mortally wounded!......But he perhaps still lives, thought she, and will be restored to me! ......She cast an eager and bewildered glance on the waggon, where she beheld

six wounded soldiers stretched side by side: in a moment the trembling widow examined the uniforms; she did not find her son's, and she was therefore convinced that he was not among the number. The unfortunate men all seemed to be at the very point of death. She breathed again, and yet a profound sigh escaped her!...... The waggon stopped before the door of the house in which she lodged, and the owner was required to take charge of two of the wounded soldiers. Whilst the master of the house, though tolerably rich, hesitated to receive them, the poor widow animated by a feeling of benevolence, went down stairs, having previously taken from a closet the key of her son's apartment; she approached the waggon, and informed the driver that she would willingly receive the youngest. Here is one, said he, who cannot be much more than seventeen......Ah! let me take charge of him! exclaimed Madame Miller. The soldier was immediately removed from the waggon; he

had fainted, one of his arms was in a sling, and his head was so wrapt up in bandages that it was impossible to distinguish his features. The widow, who was bathed in tears, dared not raise her eyes to look on him. He was conveyed into the house, the widow called her servant, and giving her the key said: "conduct this unfortunate youth to my son's apartment, and lay him in the bed, this action will in some measure ease my mind." Her directions were immediately obeyed; but though the dying soldier quickly recovered from the swoon he did not resume the use of his senses. Madame Miller instantly sent for a surgeon. A charitable nun voluntarily offered to take charge of the stranger. The surgeon having examined his wounds declared that he could not survive for twenty-four hours. The widow had not courage to enter the chamber; her heart would have been wrung on beholding a young soldier expiring on the bed of her Alexis, of that beloved son whose

fate was unknown to her! She passed her time in praying, weeping and preparing lint for the wounds of the young soldier. She abundantly supplied every thing that could be of service to him, and the good nun constantly rendered her an account of his situation. On the following day Madame Miller was informed that the patient was still delirious, and that he frequently spoke of his mother. On hearing this she was deeply affected. Oh! heaven, she exclaimed, if my Alexis should be wounded, may he fall into the hands of some mother who is apprehensive for the safety of her own child, and he will then be as carefully attended to as this poor soldier!......In the evening the surgeon informed Madame Miller that his patient was considerably better, and that he should even entertain hopes of his recovery were it not for the continuance of delirium, which he observed was a dangerous symptom accompanying a severe wound in the head. The poor young man, said

he, whenever he examines the bed and furniture of the apartment, fancies he is in his mother's house and his agitation is extreme......Ah! exclaimed Madame Miller has he a mother whom he loves! then I will supply her place until he be restored to her!......At this moment the good nun entered the room saying that the patient persisted in declaring he was at home, that he was anxiously calling on his mother, and that he had, a few moments before, been on the point of rising from the bed, had not his strength fortunately failed him. These circumstances increased the interest which Madame Miller already felt for the unfortunate stranger. Well, said she, I must at length resolve to see him; when kneeling by his bedside I shall offer up my prayers to heaven with the greater confidence!......She proceeded to the apartment; as she approached she heard the wounded soldier exclaim: —Oh! dearest mother! why do you not come to see your child!......On hearing this

voice, which though almost suffocated by sobs, she could not fail to recognize; she rushed towards the bed ; the young man uttered a shriek of joy, she embraced him with a countenance bathed in tears ......It was Alexis ! what a reward for a charitable action ! and what language is capable of describing the transports of a mother in such a situation !......

Alexis in a few words related his history : being covered with wounds and left for dead on the field of battle, he had been stripped of his clothes. In about twelve hours afterwards some one accidentally discovered that he was still living and he was placed in a waggon and removed ; the uniform which he wore on his arrival at Lnzi had been borrowed from a soldier belonging to a different regiment.

Emilia, who was quickly apprized of all that had taken place, came that very evening to complete the happiness of the widow and her son.

The convalescence of Alexis was lin-

gering; at the termination of eight months he was restored to perfect health; he then received his discharge from the army and an honorable employment. The two lovers were united in marriage at Luzi, in their own parish church: there the same priest who had blessed the first moment of their existence, ensured by a new benediction the happiness of their whole lives.

The good widow now enjoys the reward of her virtues and maternal tenderness; her son is happy and grateful.

THE END.

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